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Of Horses And Men

Developments in Greek Cavalry Training and Warfare (550-350 BC) with
a Focus on Athens and Xenophon

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Annelies Koolen

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Promotor:

Prof. dr. L. de Blois

Copromotor:

Dr. P. Erdkamp (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

Manuscriptcommissie:

Prof. dr. A.P.M.H. Lardinois

Prof. dr. O.J. Hekster

Prof. dr. F.J.A.M. Meijer (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

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List of Abbreviations

CC	On the Cavalry Commander, Xenophon
PH	On Horsemanship, Xenophon
Ec	Economica, Xenophon
Cyr	Cyropaideia, Xenophon
Ag	Agesilaus, Xenophon
Her	Histories, Herodotus
Hell	Hellenica, Xenophon
Thuc	Peloponnesian War, Thucydides
Plut. Ag.	Agesilaus, Plutarchus
Plut. Pel.	Pelopidas, Plutarchus
Ath. Const.	Athenian Constitution, Aristotle

The first time a modern author will be cited in a footnote, full bibliographical details will be given. At the end of the book the reader will also find a bibliography.

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Chapter 1 Preface

1.1. Area of research and description of method

This doctoral thesis follows the developments of training and warfare in Athenian cavalry between 550 – 350 BC. It will focus on horsemanship, as I agree with Xenophon who states that this is the most important factor for a cavalry unit to win any battle:

It is clear, however, that no troops will be able to inflict loss on a much stronger army with impunity, unless they are so superior in the practical application of horsemanship to war that they show like experts contending with amateurs. [2] This superiority can be attained first and foremost if your marauding bands are so thoroughly drilled in riding that they can stand the hard work of a campaign. For both horses and men that are carelessly trained in this respect will naturally be like women struggling with men.¹

This may look like a very obvious statement, but in truth horsemanship has not much been dealt with by historians, who usually focus on numbers, ranks, social status and weaponry of *hippeis* in general or give large descriptions of battles. Which of course are all important aspects, but the level of horsemanship of a cavalry commander and his men would forge all these other factors into either a victory or defeat. As Xenophon says, if they fail in horsemanship, they will fail to win any battle at all.

¹ CC 8.1-2.

This will put my dissertation in the fields of both military and hippological science. These sciences will be connected by the research question which is ‘Is there an explanation from the perspective of horsemanship why the Athenian cavalry seems not to be able to dominate the battlefield, especially in Xenophon’s time?’

This question first occurred to me, when I noticed, while studying Xenophon, that in contrast to the apparently highly effective cavalry of the Athenian Empire, the cavalry of the 4th century apparently was not very effective. Xenophon even seems to complain about the state of the Athenian cavalry and so it appeared to me that he did not only want to put forward his own expertise in his works, but he had another, more hidden, motivation for writing these treatises *On Horsemanship* and *Cavalry Commander*.

1.2. Literary sources

To answer this question I have made extensive use of many sources available. The list of publications on horses, warfare and horsetraining in general is endless. I will discuss only the ones that are relevant to my research. The books that are currently available on the subject deal in the main with the array of weaponry, the composition of the cavalry, tactics and description of battles or concentrate on social and economical issues. A number of scholars have completed research on the Greek cavalry.²

² J.K. Anderson wrote a book on Xenophon and horsemanship (J.K. Anderson, *Ancient Greek Horsemanship*, University of California Press 1961). But this mainly deals with horsemanship in general and not in a military context. In another book he sets forth Greek cavalry theory and practice in the age of Xenophon, in which he discusses weapon training, tactical training and battles (J.K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon*, University of California Press 1970); other publications are G.R. Bugh, *The Horsemen of Athens*, Princeton

Of course, this is a rather busy area of research. The general assumption regarding Greek cavalry at the time can be expressed as follows: ‘All it came to, in most cities, was that a few wealthy men rode on horses; they were useful for scouting or raiding supplies, but they rarely played any serious part in battle; there is no case of Greek cavalry in Greece, putting Thessaly aside, either employing shock tactics or turning the enemy’s flank’.³

The reason why Athenian cavalry apparently remained subordinate to the hoplites is outlined as follows: ‘the usual explanation is the lack of stirrups. According to Spence it had to do with social attitudes and conditions. The most important of these in much of Greece was the domination of military thinking by the hoplite ethos and traditions – although the high cost of owning a horse also contributed by restricting the number of cavalrymen available.’⁴

It is also believed though that the hoplite was probably not so effective in Greece: ‘Hoplites were developed to fight pitched battles on level ground. But most of Greece is not level, and pitched battles were rare’.⁵ Nevertheless it can hardly be said the Greek hoplite was ineffective on the battlefield, whereas this tended to be the case with the Greek cavalry.

As to training, it looks like there has not been much evidence of armies training on a daily basis. According to Lazenby, one cannot expect too much professionalism in Greek armies since there were no professional armies at the

University Press 1988); I. Spence, *The Cavalry of Classical Greece* (Oxford Clarendon Press 1993); L.J. Worley, *Hippeis, The Cavalry of Ancient Greece* (Westview Press, Boulder 1994) and R.E. Gaebel, *Cavalry Operations in the Ancient Greek World* (University of Oklahoma Press 2002).

³ Ellis, *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism*, (London: Thames and Hudson 1976) 56; HMND (Hellenistic Military and Naval Developments, (W.W. Tarn 1930) 5.

⁴ Spence (1993) xix.

⁵ Anderson (1970), 111.

time nor was there any basic tactical training.⁶ Cavalry training in Greece apparently depended on the political situation: in times of peace armies hardly exercised and the cavalry would neglect its routine. During times of war the cavalry got enough practise and its effectiveness would increase by the day.⁷

J. Ober, on the other hand, writes that the development in Greek warfare is evident. At first, raiding played an important role in the ‘old’ warfare.⁸ The cavalry had an important role to play herein. Raiding was an important strategic part of Greek warfare. During the Peloponnesian War and thereafter, Greek warfare became more economically driven. It was more important to close off the supply routes to cities. This was to give the cavalry an important role.

As will be clear by now, in my doctoral thesis, I refer predominantly to Xenophon. Xenophon was taken prisoner by the Boiotians in 411 when he was 20 years old and he befriended Proxenus, a Boeotian with whom he travelled to Asia to assist Cyrus the Younger. From 401 he remained in Persia and after his ‘March of the Ten Thousand’ he was exiled from Athens because he was suspected of oligarchic, pro-Spartan sympathies. He fought against his own country together with his good friend, Agesilaus of Sparta, in the battle at Coronea in 394 BC. His son Gryllus served in the Athenian cavalry but died in the Battle at Mantinea in 362 BC.

In classical Antiquity, Xenophon was already regarded, similarly to Thucydides, an accurate historian.⁹ He wrote the *Hellenica*, a large work dealing with the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, starting from the point in

⁶ J. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army* (Warminster: Aris & Philips 1985) 24.

⁷ CC 1.18 – 19.

⁸ J. Ober, *Fortress Attica* (Leiden: Brill 1985) 35.

⁹ Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* 1.37.4.

time at which Thucydides had stopped. He also wrote the *Anabasis*, a history of 50 000 Greek mercenaries who fought with Cyrus the Younger against the King of Persia, Artaxerxes. In the first encounter at the Battle at Cynaxa in 401 BC they lost Cyrus and their cause. During their return to Greece, known as the *Anabasis*, Xenophon leads them.

Xenophon's most important works for this dissertation are his *On Horsemanship* and the *Cavalry Commander* which were written after the Peloponnesian War¹⁰ although the exact year is not clear.

These works may be seen as an amalgam of Greek cavalry expertise. They are based on his own experiences. Xenophon's work outlines best practice over a period of 150 years and it is not strange that Xenophon combines so many influences in his works. He had after all befriended the Spartan king, Agesilaus, and a Boiotian young man, Proxenus. He participated with both of them in campaigns and would no doubt have discussed cavalry issues and tactics. He gained an intimate knowledge of Persia and even became acquainted with Cyrus the Younger. Xenophon is said to have written the *Anabasis* under the pseudonym of 'Themistogenes from Syracuse', according to Plutarch.¹¹ This could point to Syracusan sympathies as well, although this is not very obvious in his works.

In Classical Antiquity, Xenophon had his followers. Polybius in any case was aware of the military writings of Xenophon, for he makes a casual remark in his *Historiae* to the works at the city of New Carthage, which in the words of Xenophon are described as '*a workshop of war*'¹².

¹⁰ According to CC 7.4 the book was written after the Peloponnesian war.

¹¹ Plutarchus, *De Gloria Atheniensium* 1; Hell 3.1.2: W.E. Higgins, *Xenophon the Athenian* (Albany, State University of NY Press 1977) 93 and 98.

¹² Polybius, *Historiae* 10.20.7.

Xenophon writes about the horse's character and exterior, and discusses the training of cavalry horses and riders. He says his work is partly similar to Simon's, to whom he refers briefly in his introduction of the *On Horsemanship*.¹³ Works said to be attributed to Simon are titled, *On Horsemanship*, *Hippiatrikon* and *Hipposkopikon*.¹⁴

It is interesting to note that Xenophon's work also forms the basis of classical horsemanship. He still forms part of the compulsory literature for students taking British Horse Society¹⁵ examinations.

Together with Xenophon I have used the *Histories* of Herodotus and Thucydides, dealing with respectively the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War. Apart from these sources, I have also used works written by Arrian,

¹³ The main predecessor of Xenophon was Simon of Athens, though little survives of his work. Xenophon makes reference to him and for that reason so do I. According to Pliny, the first person to write about horsemanship was Simon of Athens. (Pliny, 34.19.76) He was probably a *hipparch* (in the *Hippeis* of Aristophanes we also encounter a *hipparch* by that name) who had his own achievements carved in stone with a bronze horse on top. This statue was placed in the Eleusinium. Simon would appear to have been quite well known in view of the fact that a horseman statue was carved of him by the sculptor Demetrios (Pliny 34.76).

Hirt describes a relief found at the Eleusinium which appears to depict Simon with a horse at an altar of the goddesses Ceres and Proserpina. (A.L. Hirt, *Die Geschichte der Baukunst bei der Alten* (Berlin: Reimer 1821 – 1827) 191) Unfortunately I could not trace this relief as it now forms part of a private collection.

Around 450 BC, Simon wrote a standard work on horsemanship that was renowned in classical antiquity. Unfortunately only a few paragraphs remain. Xenophon, he writes, copied some of Simon's findings and added material based on his own experience as a cavalry commander and horse trainer.

¹⁴ Suidas t 987, a 4739 and k1621; Suda: alpha, 4739; Suda: kappa, 1621.

¹⁵ 'The *BHS Manual Of Equitation* (Kenilworth Press 2011) the official handbook on learning to ride and training the ridden horse. Essential for students taking British Horse Society examinations. Offers a complete and authoritative system of training for horse and rider, from complete novice through to advanced. The methods outlined are based on the classical concepts first written about by Xenophon (430-343BC), maintained by the Spanish Riding School in Vienna and now amended for competitions by the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI). This expanded and updated edition takes account of modern-day teaching methods and practices in the horse world.'

Plutarch, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo to verify or clarify Xenophon, Herodotus or Thucydides.

For argumentation purposes I shall draw on specialist literature from a later date, compiled by people who themselves had received practical cavalry training. Horses and the training of horses have not changed over time and neither has the need for the training of cavalry. Now and then, in order to clarify ancient sources I will allude to passages from later works when I believe this serves a useful purpose and I will make reference to military horsemanship experts such as Dom Duarte, King of Portugal in the 15th century and an excellent horseman, a 19th century US Cavalry Colonel who wrote a note on training the US cavalry, and Alois Podhajsky, Officer in the former Austro-Hungarian cavalry and former director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna.¹⁶ Again, this will not lead to anachronisms or chronological disorder, because horsemanship and horsetraining did not fundamentally change over time.

1.3. Non-literary sources

In this doctoral thesis I was grateful that I could use a number of archaeological sources. Aside from decorated vases which are also referred by Greenhalgh (1973) and Worley (1994) in their works on archaic cavalry, I looked at

¹⁶ Dom Duarte wrote a book on knightly horsemanship and jousting: L. Preto et alii, *Dom Duarte, The royal book of jousting, horsemanship, and knightly combat : a translation into English of King Dom Duarte's 1438 treatise Livro da ensinança de bem cavalgar toda sela (The art of riding in every saddle)* (Chivalry Bookshelf 2005); the ordnance note of the US Colonel is to be found in Appendix A; Podhajsky wrote several handbooks on horsemanship and includes references to cavalry practice at war in: A. Podhajsky, *My Horses, My Teachers*, (Trafalgar Square Publishing 1997, original print 1967).

excavated bridles and bits (Pernice 1896 and Donder 1980) and lead tablets containing catalogues of Athenian cavalrytribes and men (Braun 1970 and Kroll 1977). I also had acces to extensive Spanish archaeological research on bridles, weaponry and other cavalry-associated material (Quesada Sanz 2005).

These sources can provide us with much direct information on bits and bridles, with details of who served in the cavalry and even on the colour of the horses. I have endeavoured to demonstrate the significance of these archaeological finds from the perspective of horsemanship.

1.4. ‘A workshop of war’

Now I will first give a brief overview of the research questions which lie at the basis of each chapter.

I will begin in chapter 2 by outlining what horsemanship entails. As I have said above, this is a factor that is important to the functioning of the cavalry which has been largely overlooked by historians, who tend to concentrate on numbers, rank and the status of the horsemen. The functioning of the cavalry, which in fact depends mostly on the horsemanship of the riders and their commanders, is all too often set aside.

I will then take a look at war practice in the period between 550 and 350 BC. This will be the focus of Chapter 3 in which I will be dealing with cavalry tactics. Most of what we know, both from literary and archaeological sources, is about Athens. The focus, therefore, will be on Athens. A number of key moments in Greek military history are examined, starting with the Persian Wars

(500 – 479 BC). I will then move on to the Peloponnesian War, particularly the Sicilian Expedition and after that, the period after the Peloponnesian War.

During the Peloponnesian War, which started with the Archidamian War (431-425 BC) many battles took place and we see an increase in cavalry battles. For example, the Battle at Delium (424) at which the cavalymen of the Boiotians and Spartans fought against the Athenian cavalry. I will also be discussing the Sicilian Expedition (418 – 415 BC), which, in first instance, might not seem to be an obvious choice. Given its geographical location, Sicily was a repository for different cultures. There was Carthage to the south; in the west, the Celtiberian warlike tribes, and the Etruscans in the north. The Sicilian Greek cities still had contact with the Greek motherland.

In a passage from Herodotus we read that Sicily had to be constantly on the alert. Gelon, for example, was forever keeping Carthage at bay. The Sicilian population comprised Siculi, Sicani, Elyni, Greeks, Iberians, Carthaginians, and perhaps others from Italy also. The island was therefore always divided in terms of loyalty. These cultures were exposed to each other not only in peacetime but particularly also in times of war and this makes Sicily interesting from a military perspective.

After the Peloponnesian War (431 – 401 BC), several Greek cities were constantly in conflict with their allies. These decades also saw the rise to power of Sparta with Agesilaus defeating the Persian cavalry and the rise of Thebes. Some famous battles from this period are the Battle at Coronea (394 BC), the Battle at Leuctra (371 BC) and the Battle at Mantinea (362 BC). At Coronea, Xenophon fought together with Agesilaus.

I will look at these battles to get a clear view of the development in cavalry tactics. The most important focus of this dissertation will be the idea that tactics change in times of war and both sides learn from and react to each other. Archidamus of Sparta remarks that when fighting amongst themselves, the Greeks know what to expect from each other. Thucydides states: ‘In a struggle with Peloponnesians and neighbours our strength is of the same character, and it is possible to move swiftly on the different points.’¹⁷ But as soon as the Greeks wage war on other peoples, change becomes imperative.

This corresponds with How, who writes: ‘wars fought between two widely separated races accustomed to a different physical environment (...) it may naturally happen that each race or nation has developed an armament and a style of fighting suitable to the nature of the country in which it dwells, and is practically unable to alter its national arms and tactics. In such cases it will be the rule rather than the exception, that the nature and character of the arms used by the two nations will determine the tactics and the tactics in turn the strategy of the campaign. The reason for this is that the issue of a battle may often depend entirely on the nature of the ground on which it is fought; hence it will often be the main object of a general's strategy to compel or induce the enemy to fight on ground which decisively favours one method of fighting, or fatally handicaps another.’¹⁸

This war practice then forms the basis for my interpretation of Xenophon’s theoretical manuals. In this Chapter I will try to provide a new context to

¹⁷ Thuc 1.80.3.

¹⁸ W.W. How, *Arms, Tactics and Strategy in the Persian War* (The Journal of Hellenic Studies, Vol. 43, Part 2 1923) 117.

Xenophon's writings as I will be discussing why Xenophon wrote about horsemanship and the commandership of the cavalry in relation to the military and political situation in Athens in this time. I will be describing developments in Greek cavalry warfare which, I believe, have caused Xenophon to write his treatises about specific subjects. I believe these treatises should not be seen as works written isolated from the military developments in Xenophons time and were merely meant as manuals. His advice is not entirely theoretical because his writing was in fact based on his own experience and expertise and thus forms 'a workshop of war'.¹⁹ This analysis and the advice contained therein and how we should look upon Xenophon's works are discussed in this chapter.

In Chapter 4 I will rely on Xenophon's own analysis of the situation in Athens as outlined by him in various works and I endeavour to apply the advice in his manuals to the situation in Athens at the time that he was writing these works. I also try to establish whether his advice was implemented in the city of Athens or not.

In my conclusive Chapter 5, therefore, I hope to put Xenophon in a different, partly new context, based on the discussed war practice in his time. I also hope to provide an answer as to why the Athenian cavalry did not manage to dominate on the battlefield in Xenophon's time.

¹⁹ Ag 1.26; Hell 3.4.16-17.

Chapter 2. Horsemanship

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe horsemanship and explain why it was so important to the cavalry and for purposes of evaluating the performance of the cavalry on the battlefield. Riding skills are naturally fundamental to all of this, as Dom Duarte, king of Portugal and an enthusiastic rider himself confirmed in 1438:

‘And we can really understand the great advantage that the skilled horsemen have when at war, compared to others less qualified in the art of riding, even if they have identical abilities in the other necessary arts; riding skills are one of the most valuable skills for warriors. And those who have very good horses can get very little advantage out of them if they do not really have the appropriate riding skills, as they would not know how to do it.’²⁰

But horsemanship does not concern just riding, as we are informed by a 19th century US cavalry commander:

As long as cavalry exists, however it may be armed or manoeuvred, the fundamental principle of such instruction will be horsemanship; that science which gives the soldier perfect control over the machine which transports him; which makes it safe for himself and effective against his enemy; which gives him confidence in his own prowess, and which inspires him with an esprit de corps, and a love for his horse and the saddle

²⁰ Dom Duarte (1438) in translation of Antonio Fanco Preto & Luis Preto (2005) 6.

which every cavalryman who is really master of his steed must feel. There is nothing chimerical in these ideas.²¹

Horsemanship among other things entails that:

No one can claim that our tactics do not contemplate instruction in equitation and the knowledge of the horse, for, brief as its requirements are, and skeleton-like as are its elementary rules upon the former subject, it does prescribe that officers shall "have a thorough knowledge of the structure and powers of endurance of horses," and be "familiar with the rules for their management under all circumstances. To understand in detail the method of shoeing them, and to be able to treat all ordinary cases of injury and disease."²²

As already outlined by the cited experts, all these factors combined with good horsemanship are necessary for a properly functioning cavalry. Horsemanship has to do with a number of factors. First and foremost, horse riding itself; an understanding of horses, knowledge of the horse's build; expertise in horse care; how and why certain bridles are preferred; the training of horses to prepare them to perform appropriately on the field with pleasure and devotion, and, specifically where the cavalry is concerned: knowledge of weaponry; military formations and how a cavalry unit should function on the battlefield.

In this chapter, based on Xenophon's and contemporary accounts, I will explain all these facets of horsemanship in order to demonstrate as clearly as possible the key factors governing professional cavalry practices. We shall begin with the horse.

²¹ Appendix A, lines 21 – 29.

²² Appendix A, lines 36 – 44.

2.2. Horses

Horses are herd animals and this makes it possible to ride a horse. A herd is steered by means of pressure from the animals themselves: the most experienced horses lead or are at the sides or at the rear. These horses push their bodies against the horses next to them or in front of them to make them turn, go faster or slower. It is natural to the horse to yield to pressure. This is why we can ride horses: they yield to pressure exercised either by the bit, the legs or the weight of the rider. These are the so-called ‘aids’, through which we are able to ride horses and make clear what we want them to do. Because these aids come naturally to them, horses will understand them immediately and by instinct, if they are applied correctly.

Another characteristic of the horse’s nature is its docility and willingness to cooperate. Not cooperating in the herd will mean isolation and certain death. Most horses therefore are willing to cooperate and endure hardships to the extent of harming themselves because of this herd instinct. Only the most dominant and self-conscious horses will not put up with such treatment. Horse riding is based on the nature of the horse, and good training should never go against the nature of the horse. Most horses by nature have a high level of trainability.²³

In antiquity too, people were aware of the benevolent character of horses and their will to please their riders. To quote Aelian:

²³ <http://www.classical-equitation.com/documents/Parttwoforwebsite.pdf> (last visited: 26 July 2009).

‘if a horse receives careful attention, he repays his benefactor by being good-natured and friendly. How Bucephalus bore himself to Alexander is a story that is current everywhere and would give me no pleasure to repeat. I shall also pass over the horse of Antiochos (Soter) which avenged his master by killing the Gaul (his name was Centoarates) who slew Antiochos on the battlefield. Socles then, about whom not many seem to know, was an Athenian who was esteemed, and indeed was a comely boy. Now he bought a horse, handsome too like its master but of a violently amorous disposition and with a far sharper eye than other horses. Hence it conceived a passionate love for its master, and when he approached, it would snort; and if he patted it, it would neigh; when he mounted, it would be docile; when he stood before it, it would cast languishing glances at him. These actions already savoured of love, but were thought pleasing. When however the horse, becoming too reckless, seemed to be meditating an assault upon the boy, and tales about the pair of a too monstrous nature began to circulate, Socles would not tolerate the slander, and in his detestation of a licentious lover sold the horse. But the animal could not bear to be separated from the beautiful boy and ended its days by a rigorous starvation.’²⁴

Plinius also writes that the horses in the Circus Maximus knew very well when they were being encouraged by the crowds and cheered on at a victory.²⁵

The intelligence of the horse and its innate will to please is a valuable asset on the battlefield. For example, Cyrus the Younger dismounts from his chariot and mounts his battle horse to give battle to the Persian king.²⁶ He gives the

²⁴ Aelian, *Varia Historia* 6.44.

²⁵ Plinius, *Historiae* 8.159: ‘nam in circo ad currus iuncti non dubie intellectum adhortationis et gloriae fatentur’.

²⁶ Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.8.3.

following reason for so doing: a horse with rider is more manoeuvrable than a chariot and he can make use of his horse's senses. A rider has four eyes and ears, so to say.²⁷ He states:

‘For they say that a horse actually sees many things with his eyes before his rider does and makes them known to him and that he hears many things with his ears before his rider does and gives him intimation of them.’²⁸

Horsebreeds

Evidence from excavations at Dereivka, Southern Russia, seems to show that the oldest fighting cavalry was a mounted cavalry.²⁹ In the Afanasjevo culture, antler cheek fragments of bits provide evidence that the horse was used for riding; there is no evidence that it was used as a draught horse.³⁰

The second Millennium witnessed the development of new equestrian art. The solid wheel was superseded by lighter, spoked wheels and the heavy carts evolved into the light, highly manoeuvrable two-wheeled war chariot. From this period on, the horse was used as a draught animal instead of oxen and asses.³¹

In the Middle East the horse was coupled with the chariot throughout the second Millennium. Figures of mounted horsemen appear in Egyptian art of the 18th and 19th Dynasties. From the 1st Millennium onwards, mounted cavalry

²⁷ Cyr 4.4.14 – 20.

²⁸ Cyr 4.4.21.

²⁹ A. Azzaroli, *An Early History of Horsemanship* (Brill/W. Backhuys 1985) 7 – 8: Dereivka is dated 4350 and 3720 B.C by radiocarbon dating and dendrochronology.

³⁰ Azzaroli (1985) 13.

³¹ Azzaroli (1985) 15.

developed in the Middle East, at first together with chariotry, which was deemed more useful. Mounted cavalry became standard among the Hittites and the Assyrians. They had predecessors, however. In the regions of the barbarian tribes farther north, mounted cavalry had developed earlier. These barbarian riders had already developed a remarkable skill in handling the bow from horseback. The horse reached the Eastern Mediterranean through Eastern Europe and Southwestern Asia. Rounded cheekpieces of bone are known from Mycenae since the early Helladic period (about 2000 BC). These bits are of the pattern used for draught horses, but rough clay figurines from Mycenae, Cyprus and Crete also show riders on horseback. In the 16th and 15th centuries BC, horses and chariots appear in figures from Crete and Cyprus.³²

In antiquity, people were endeavouring to improve their horses and to strengthen the qualities of their breeds. We know of breeding programmes that existed in Mitanni and Assyria to improve horses' height.³³ As a rule horses today are not larger than horses in antiquity: the horses in ancient Caucasus were larger than the present day Caucasian breeds.³⁴ To quote Azzaroli:

“The barrow grave and ochre tomb cultures that superseded the Srednij Stog civilizations in southern Russia are the cradle of the great Indo-European and Indo-Iranian ethnic group which expanded widely over Eurasia and dispersed the horse into far away countries. Horsemanship developed primarily under their influence and for a long time, until late in the first Millennium, these tribes held an undisputed supremacy in equestrian art.”³⁵

³² Azzaroli (1985) 42 – 46.

³³ In Urartu programmes to breed larger horses were established by the court. (M. Junkelmann, *Die Reiter Roms I* (1998, 3rd print) 230.

³⁴ Azzaroli (1985) 20.

³⁵ Azzaroli (1985) 12.

The horse seems to have reached the Near East through Armenia or Iran; the Sumerians, who called their asses ‘anshu’, gave the name of ‘anshu-kur-ra’ to the newcomer: ‘the ass from the mountains’ or ‘the ass from the east’. The horse was not considered a fitting riding animal for people of high rank. Azzaroli cites the following text:

“Let my Lord honour his kingly dead. If you are the king of the Cananeans, you are also the king of the Akkadians. Let my Lord not ride horses. Let him mount only chariots or half-asses and honour his kingly head.”³⁶

The horse was probably of little importance to the economy of Mesopotamia until the late 18th century BC: it is not mentioned in Hammurabi’s code which dates from approximately 1750 BC. The necessity for breeding larger animals came from the plundering of Cimmerian and Scythian horsemen in the 8th and 7th century. Scholars assume that Egyptian, Hittite and Mesopotamian horses originated from Central Asia.

“It may be concluded that ancient Egyptian horses of which the Buhen skeleton is the earliest known representative (measuring 150 cm at the withers), together with Hittite horses, and probably also the later Mesopotamian horses, all belong to the same group. Contemporary pictures show that these horses bore a close resemblance to the modern ‘Arab’ breed. Measurement of the bones establishes that at least some of these horses were larger than had been previously supposed. Their origins should be looked for in Central Asia.”³⁷

³⁶ Azzaroli (1985) 27.

³⁷ Clutton-Brock, “The Buhen Horse,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* (1974) 1: The Buhen horse is an example of a horse measuring 150 cm at the withers (1700 BC); M.A Littauer, J.H

Xenophon does not write about horse breeds. Yet many tribes and peoples were famous for their breeding and horsemanship. Vergil mentions Epidaurus,³⁸ Thessalia,³⁹ Epirus and Mycenae,⁴⁰ as well as Scythia⁴¹, Elis⁴², Gallia⁴³, the Bisaltes and Geloni⁴⁴. Vegetius mentions Epirus and Sarmatia.⁴⁵ Arrian speaks of Celts, Iberians, Getae, Raiti; Thessalians, Scythians, Thracians, Persians, Greeks, Sicilians and ‘those who are famous for their horsemanship’; Alans and Sarmatians⁴⁶. Simon and Strabo consider Thessalia to be the most important Greek breeding area.⁴⁷

Gaebel believes that there should be some scepticism about ‘breeds’ in Antiquity: ‘horse and pony types can be and have been altered significantly in less than a century by the conscious introduction of new bloodlines.’⁴⁸ But a recent study on Scythian horses in *kurghans* confirms that horse breeds with lineages did exist in the past. Furthermore the researchers involved conclude that the diversity in our own modern horse breeds probably is not a result of trade and breeding programmes, but rather of the survival of these ancient lineages.⁴⁹ Such a lineage is to be found with Nesaian horses⁵⁰ that were very

Crouwel (2001) *The Earliest Evidence for Metal Bridle Parts* (Oxford Journal of Archaeology 20 (4)), 329–338).

³⁸ Vergil, *Georgica* 3.44: ‘(...) domitrixque Epidaurus equorum’.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, 3.94: ‘Pelion’ and 3.115: ‘Pelethronii Lapithae’.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 3.121: ‘Epirum (...) Mycenae’.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 3.197: ‘Scythiae’.

⁴² *Ibidem*, 3.202: ‘Eli’.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 3.204: ‘Belgica (...) esseda’.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 3.461: ‘Bisaltae (...) Gelonus’.

⁴⁵ Vegetius, *Mulomedicina* 3.6.

⁴⁶ Arrian, *Ars Tactica* 44.1; 33.1 ; 16.1 ; 4.1.

⁴⁷ Simon, *De Re Equestri* 1; Strabo, *Geographica* 8.8.1.

⁴⁸ Gaebel (2002) 19.

⁴⁹ “Hundreds of large burial mounds are found in the region of Arzhan, a necropolis located at the foothills of the Sajon mountains in the Tuva district (South Siberia). These are kurgans of

expensive and highly sought-after because of their height.⁵¹ This breed is alternately called Persian, Median and Parthian. These horses may have been of Scythian origin.⁵² Strabo inform us that Scyths emigrated from Southern Russia to the Near East and the North of Greece. To quote Strabo:

‘The Sacae (Scyths) however made raids like those of the Cimmerians and Treres, some into regions close to their own country, other into regions farther away. For instance, they occupied Bactriana, and acquired possession of the best land in Armenia, which they left named after themselves Sakasene and they advanced as far as the country of the Cappadocians.’⁵³

Recent research has demonstrated that the Nesian horse was not bred on the plains of Nisaion, as first presumed, but rather in the area of Nisa near the Oxus river in Chorasan. This is in the northeast of Iran close to the modern border of Turkmenistan.⁵⁴

the Scythians, a nomadic people of the Eurasian steppes. Excavations have been conducted at two kurgans, Arzhan 1 (8th century BC) and Arzhan 2 (late 7th century BC). They provided numerous horse skeletons, i.e. the remains of horses that were buried along with the Scythian kings. We amplified the mitochondrial control region from bone samples of those horses and compared these sequences to an existing database of more than 600 living horses. An unexpectedly high genetic diversity was found within the Scythian horse population. These findings show that the Arzhan horses had a diversity similar to more recent horse breeds. We conclude that horse breeds with a variety of ancestral lineages existed in the distant past. Current diversity in horse breeds is probably not a product of historic trade and breeding practices, but rather a result of overall survival of ancient lineages.” (Weber C., J. Burger, A. Ludwig, K.-W. Alt, & N. Benecke (2005): *Molecular typing of a Scythian horse population*. 18.06-19.06.2005, 2th Archaeozoology and Genetics ICAZ Workshop, Cambridge, UK).

⁵⁰ Her 7.40; Her 9.20.

⁵¹ Strabo 2.13.7.

⁵² Diodorus Siculus 2.43.4 – 7.

⁵³ Strabo 11.8.4.

⁵⁴ J. Dum – Tragut, *Kilikische Heilkunst für Pferde* (Olms Verlag, Hildesheim 2005) 44. In this book a translation of a Cilician veterinarian work is offered (13th century AD).

To secure a frequent supply of horses for the Persian army, Cappadocia and Armenia were obliged to pay an annual tribute in horses to the Persian king. It is remarkable that after the Scythian invasion in the Near East, programmes to breed larger horses were started by the Assyrians around the 7th Century BC. This may indicate a supply of new blood by larger horses from the Eurasian steppes. The Assyrian knowledge of horses and horse breeding was adopted by the Medes in the 6th Century BC and through them, by the Persians⁵⁵. Archaeological and literary evidence indicates that larger horses from the Eurasian Steppes found their way into the Near East and Greece, together with Indo-Iranian peoples,⁵⁶ as commented on by Pausanias:

‘Now after the Persian invasion the Lacedaimonians became keener breeders of horses than any other Greeks.’⁵⁷

After the Persian Wars, Greece developed large scale horse-breeding programmes; specialised horse breeders started to produce better war and race horses.⁵⁸ These breeders may have used Persian horses to improve their native

⁵⁵ Dum-Tragut (2005) 44.

⁵⁶ M. Jankovich, *They Rode Into Europe, the Fruitful Exchange in the Arts of Horsemanship between East and West* (1968, English version London 1971). In his book Jankovich explains the spread of the steppehorse and the *horsemanship* of the nomads via southern Russia and Bactria into the west. He states these horses were known as the Soulon-horses (as they were called by the Chinese) from Bactria, closely related to the Akhal Tekke-horses of southern Russia.)

⁵⁷ Pausanias, *Hellados Periegesis* 6.2.1.

⁵⁸ Strabo 16.2.10: ‘Apameia also has a town called Chersonnese (...) it was also called Pella at one time. Here too, were the waroffice and the royal [Macedonian] stud. The royal stud consisted of more than 30000 mares and 300 stallions. Here too, were coltbreakers (poolodamnai) and instructors in heavy-armed warfare.’; Famous horsebreeders in Pausanias 6.2.1.: ‘Xenarkes, Lykinos, Arkesilaos and his son Lichas. Xenarkes won in Delphi, Argos and Corinth; Lykinos in Olympia.’; 6.4.10: Lamos who was a hippotrophos, so not a breeder; 6.1.3 : Cleogenes who won on a selfbred horse.

Not only men took part in these races, women too: 3.8.1: ‘Archidamos left sons when he died of whom Agis was the elder and inherited the throne instead of Agesilaos. Archidamos also had a daughter whose name was Cynisca, she was exceedingly ambitious to succeed at the Olympic

stock. According to Herodotus, the Persians raced their horses against Thessalian horses, reputed to be the best in the whole of Greece, and won.⁵⁹ Gaebel⁶⁰ questions whether there was an actual horse race, but I believe this is not that important; the anecdote shows that the Greeks were becoming increasingly aware of the differences in quality between the Greek indigenous and other breeds.

A closer look at the brands listed in Braun's publication leads us to the idea that there must have been a lively horse trade in Greece, or more probably, in the Mediterranean. At least 57 brands must have existed, including the S-brand ('san') which has to do with the sanphora⁶¹ or *san*-bearers from Sicyon. Other symbols, such as pictures of animals, indicate horses or breeds from Thessalia, Macedonia and Corinth.⁶² Most of the brands on the tablets are found in literary or artistic contexts and are described in Braun's list, in which brands are called *Zeichen*.⁶³

On the tablets, a dolphin brand is also listed which originates from South Italy, as is indicated by a fourth century volute crater.⁶⁴ Some brands, like the *caduceus* and snake (Braun Z 11 and 18), are shown on horses in Attic vase painting as early as the 6th century BC. The *caduceus* brand (Braun Z 18), for example, appears also on the coins of King Alexander I (498 – 454 BC) and of

Games, and was the first woman to breed horses and the first to win an Olympic Victory. After Cynisca other women, especially women of Lacedaimon have won Olympic victories but none of them was more distinguished for their victories than she.'

⁵⁹ Her 7.196.

⁶⁰ Gaebel (2002) 73.

⁶¹ Aristophanes, *Hippeis* 602.

⁶² J. Kroll., *An Archive of the Athenian Cavalry* (Hesperia 46, 1977, No. 2) 88.

⁶³ K. Braun, *Der Dipylon-Brunnen B1 Die Funde (Tafeln 54-93), Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenischen Abteilung*, Volume 85 (1970) 256 – 264.

⁶⁴ H. Sichtermann, *Griechische Vasen in Unteritalien*, (Tuebingen 1966) Pl 58.

King Pausanias (390 – 389 BC) of Macedonia, probably the mark of the finest Macedonian chargers. The brands must have been the trade marks of the established stables and herds that provided finer mounts for the whole of Greece.⁶⁵ Athens imported most of its horses from Thessaly, Macedonia, Corinth, Sicyon and the South of Italy.⁶⁶

There must have been horse trading not only amongst peoples in the eastern Mediterranean, but also in the West. Research results have shown that Greek colonies existed on the Iberian peninsula.⁶⁷ These might well be the Greek trading posts to which Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse in the 5th century, refers.⁶⁸

We also find that the Sicilian Greeks sent out horses on a regular basis to the Peloponnese. The Syracusan tyrant Hiero I, for example, wins a number of horse races in Greece with horses he himself had bred. His Sicilian horses were ‘world-famous’ at that time. During the Classical era, Athens encounters Sicilian horses and cavalry again and again, once during their infamous Sicilian Expedition and again during the Peloponnesian Wars. It seems that the Greeks had secured access to the Iberian horse markets via Sicily. Xenophon writes about the Celt, Iberian and Sicilian mercenaries who were sent by Dionysius of Syracuse, and their horses may have come with them from their own lands.⁶⁹

Attica is not regarded as a suitable area for breeding horses. I would like to begin by making a clear distinction between breeding horses and boarding

⁶⁵ Kroll (1977) 86 – 88.

⁶⁶ Kroll (1977) 87. The *dolphin* brand (South Italy) was found on the 4th century tablets only.

⁶⁷ F. Quesada Sanz, ed., *Gladius XXV* (Madrid 2005).

⁶⁸ Her 7.154.

⁶⁹ Hell 7.1.20 – 22.

horses. Although the Greek *hippobotos* is usually translated as both, I would prefer *hippobotein* as horse breeding and *hippotrophein* as horse boarding.⁷⁰

Breeders keep a few stallions with large herds of mares with foals, weanlings and yearlings. They sell off the redundant horses. Owners only keep horses which are of use to them, for example racehorses, draught horses or cavalry horses. Xenophon makes reference to horse breakers to whom young horses should be sent,⁷¹ therefore breeders would sell off their young unbroken horses, probably at the age of three or four years old. Once trained by the horse breakers, the horse would receive its basic training from its owner, as Xenophon explains. I am therefore assuming that the horse at that stage would be about four years old. Virgil writes that the right starting age for a racehorse or warhorse was after they had become four years of age.⁷² Horse breeders would need access to large pastures to keep their horses. They might collect their horses once every year and sell off all the sound ones.

As soon as a horse comes into training, the horse can be kept in a stable and a paddock. It would have to be fed hay and grains.⁷³ In ancient Attica the situation was no different. Athenian cavalry horses could be kept stabled and fed on grains and hay, dried grass that can be transported over large distances. It is for this reason that cavalry men received a corn allowance. Although some scholars assume that the lack of a cavalry force is due to the deficiency of pastures, this is not altogether true. On the contrary, trained horses are even better off when not grazing on grass because it contains a lot of protein and sugar which can even make a horse go lame or become colicky. Horses should

⁷⁰ CC 1.11.

⁷¹ PH 1.1.

⁷² Vergil, *Georgica* 3.193.

⁷³ Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 8.27; CC 1.16.

not be fed too much grain or grass because they easily become overweight and develop diseases accordingly. By nature, horses are steppe grazers and do not benefit on rich grass pastures.

Today we have large horse producing areas, such as Normandy in France and the Blue Grass region in Kentucky, USA, where stud farms keep their herds and young horses, usually racehorses. These horses are sold off at auctions when they are yearlings and transported to the racing stables, which are usually located in the vicinity of racetracks near cities. As soon as they advance into training, their diet will change from grass to hay and grains.

Admittedly, Herodotus does say that Attica is not suitable for cavalry. He was not referring however to the breeding or keeping of cavalry horses, but to the situation of the land from a strategic point of view. It was unsuitable for cavalry because in the case of a defeat, the cavalry would only be able to retreat by narrow mountain passes and so only a handful of armed infantry would be needed to finish them off.⁷⁴ Herodotus was not claiming that Attica was unsuitable for keeping horses, or that Athens could not have had a cavalry force of its own.

In Athens itself, there is substantial evidence of the cavalry's presence. Various monuments were erected by victors in the annual cavalry competitions⁷⁵ and some decrees of *hippeis*, which were set up near the Herms or in the stoa of the

⁷⁴ Her 9.13-15.

⁷⁵ Bryaxis Base, I.G. II2, 3130 between the Stoa of Zeus and the Royal Stoa; a base found before the southeast corner of the Stoa of Zeus (Hesperia 15, 1946, 176 – 177) and a relief showing cavalrymen of Leontis, found behind the Royal Stoa (Hesperia 40, 1971, 271 – 272).

Herms.⁷⁶ Xenophon mentions the Herms as a place for the cavalry.⁷⁷ According to Mnesimachos, also, the area of the Herms was a centre for cavalry activity:

‘Go to the Agora, to the Herms, the place frequented
by the phylarchs, and their handsome pupils, whom
Pheidon trains in mounting and dismounting.’⁷⁸

According to publications based on recent research, this area was closely connected to the Athenian cavalry; here it performed its exercises and parades.⁷⁹

As for the Athenian warhorses, they tended to be imported from the large stud farms in Thessaly, Corinth, Macedonia or Sicily. These horses might be branded or unbranded, and since neither Simon nor Xenophon put the emphasis on the breed of the horse, branding was probably not the most important feature.

Prices for race and war horses were probably high. From excavated tables with names of cavalymen together with the pricing of their horses and other

⁷⁶ J. Threpsiades and E. Vanderpool, *Pros Tois Hermais* in *Deltion* 18, 1963, Meletai 104 - 105 and 109 - 110.

⁷⁷ CC 3.2.

⁷⁸ Mnesimachos, Fragment 4, translation: W.E. Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora*, III, The Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia, Princeton 1957, 105, no. 303. Of Pheidon *symbola* are recovered together with the lead tablets (Kroll (1977) 84).

⁷⁹ For general discussion of the Herms and the Stoa of the Herms: E.B. Harrison, *The Athenian Agora*, XI, Archaic and Archaistic Sculpture, Princeton 1965, 108 - 110; H.A. Thompson and W.E. Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora*, XIV, The Agora of Athens, Princeton 1972, 94 - 95. Specifically on cavalry: Ch. Habicht, *Neue Inschriften aus dem Kerameikos*, Athenische Mitteilungen 76, 1961, 136 - 138. E. Vanderpool, ‘Victories in the Anthippasia,’ *Hesperia* 43, 1974, 311.

sources⁸⁰ we know that they varied between 200 and 1200 drachmae.⁸¹ Work and travel horses will probably have been far cheaper, in view of the lower requirements regarding build, stamina and character. In Lysias 24, the defendant speaks of a horse he had rented as a disabled person, which cost him less than keeping a mule.

The prices usually varied between 300 to 1200 drachmae.⁸² The average value on the above mentioned tables was just under 700 drachmae.⁸³ Some horses may well have fetched higher prices.⁸⁴ The most common colours of an Athenian cavalry horse are chestnut, bay, black, white and grey.⁸⁵

Xenophon saw the horse's appearance as less important than its build and its character. A warhorse should be of the right size, have good feet, be strong and muscular and have a calm but courageous character. It should not be timid by nature for these horses cannot be used to harm the enemy and often throw their riders and put them in a very awkward situation.⁸⁶

Therefore the choice of horse is important to the horseman, especially when he is serving in the cavalry and his life depends on his horse.

⁸⁰ The horse of Xenophon which he sold at his Anabasis was bought back from its purchasers by his officers who knew he loved the animal dearly. They paid 50 darics for it. Horses were used for farming as we know from Ec 18.4; Hesiod, *Erga kai Hemerai* 816.

⁸¹ A cavalry man earned 1 drachma a day from which he had to pay for armour and weapons. (CC 1.23).

⁸² Isaeus 5.43 mentions 3 minae; Aristophanes, *Nephelai* 21 – 23: 12 minae. Lysias 7.10: 12 minae.

⁸³ Kroll (1977) 89.

⁸⁴ Xenophon's own favourite horse was bought back from Persian traders by his fellow officers for 12,5 minae. He had sold it, involuntarily, to buy provisions for his army during their march back to Greece. (Xen. *Anabasis* 7.8.6); Alexander the Great's Bucephalus was purchased at a price of 13 talents (Plutarchus, *Alexander* 6.1-4), but this is a rather high price as it would mean 780 minae.

⁸⁵ Kroll (1977) 86.

⁸⁶ PH 3.9.

‘Further, uniformity of speed is the essential condition for the execution of closed charges, and this obviously cannot be assured if big men on little horses and small men on big horses are indiscriminately mixed up in the same units. Horses and men have therefore been sorted out everywhere into three categories, *light*, *medium* and *heavy*, and in periods when war was practically chronic, suitable duties have been allotted to each. It is clear, on purely mechanical grounds, that the greater the velocity of motion at the moment of collision the greater will be the chances of success, and this greater speed will be on the side of the bigger horses as a consequence of their longer stride. On the other hand, these horses, by reason of their greater weight, are used up much more rapidly than small ones.’⁸⁷

That being said of the horse’s nature, we can see why a fearful horse will never excel on the battlefield and should therefore not be trained as a cavalry horse. Xenophon writes:

‘one should beware of horses that are naturally shy. For timid horses give one no chance of using them to harm the enemy, and often throw their rider and put him in a very awkward situation.’⁸⁸

Thus, when buying a horse one should observe

‘that a horse is sound in his feet, gentle and fairly speedy, has the will and the strength to stand work, and, above all, is obedient, and is a horse that

⁸⁷ Col. Frederic Natusch Maude C.B., *Cavalry*, Encyclopedia Britannica 11th ed. 1910, vol. 5, 663.

⁸⁸ PH 3.9.

will, as a matter of course, give the least trouble and the greatest measure of safety to his rider in warfare. But those that want a lot of driving on account of their laziness, or a lot of coaxing and attention on account of their high spirit, make constant demands on the rider's hands and rob him of confidence in moments of danger.'⁸⁹

Older breeds like the Pura Raza Espanola, Camargue and Arab horse usually measure 130 – 160 cm, are usually flatgaited and have a very compliant and docile character.⁹⁰ The ancient war horse breeds might well have closely resembled today's Iberian horses. Such horses are easy to mount and to sit on and stay on without stirrups or saddle. The works of Roman authors also include many passages on horses. To quote Virgil:

“See from the first yon high-bred colt afield,
His lofty step, his limbs' elastic tread:
Dauntless he leads the herd, still first to try
The threatening flood, or brave the unknown bridge,
By no vain noise affrighted; lofty-necked,
With clean-cut head, short belly, and stout back;
His sprightly breast exuberant with brawn.
Chestnut and grey are good; the worst-hued white
And sorrel. Then lo! if arms are clashed afar,

⁸⁹ PH 3.12.

⁹⁰ On the docile character of Arabian horses: ‘The Bedouin never uses a bit or bridle of any sort, but instead, a halter with a fine chain passing round the nose. With this he controls his mare easily and effectually. He rides on a pad of cotton, fastened on the mare's back by a surcingle, and uses no stirrups. This pad is the most uncomfortable and insecure seat imaginable, but fortunately the animals are nearly always gentle and without vice. I have never seen either violent plunging, rearing, or indeed any serious attempt made to throw the rider.’ (Lady Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates (part I) (orig pub in 1879) edited, with a preface and some account of the Arabs and their horses by W.S. Blunt in two volumes, Volume II* (Frank Cass & CO. Ltd. 1968) see Chapter 28, on horses.)

Bide still he cannot: ears stiffen and limbs quake;
His nostrils snort and roll out wreaths of fire.
Dense is his mane, that when uplifted falls
On his right shoulder; betwixt either loin
The spine runs double; his earth-dinting hoof
Rings with the ponderous beat of solid horn.”⁹¹

The best horse for battle is the one described by Virgil: a courageous horse, fierce to lead the herd, not cowering when hearing unknown noises or seeing unknown things; a horse that is rather aroused than shied by noises and battle cries.

⁹¹ Vergil, *Georgica* 3.375 – 89. Translation: J. B. Greenough. Boston. Ginn & Co. 1900. On the characteristics of a good cavalry charger.

2.2. Military horsemanship

Dom Duarte (1430) is the author of one of the oldest writings on knightly horsemanship. He addresses most problems a knight may encounter on the battlefield such as falling off, throwing a spear and so on.

Xenophon was rediscovered during the Renaissance and dressage based on what people liked to call Xenophontean principles became an art practised at royal courts and riding schools. Xenophon's *On Horsemanship* became one of the new standard works on horse training in Italy, France, Germany and England. His work was translated around 1550 AD by Grisone, a riding master in Naples who used it as a source for his own book on horse training. Unfortunately Grisone did not copy Xenophon's advice to treat the horse gently. He advocated extreme punishment such as the use of live hedgehogs under the horse's tail.

Grisone's most important pupil was Pignatelli who educated De Pluvinel who later became Maître d'Equitation in France and founder of the 'Académie d'Equitation'. His most important pupil was De La Guernière, an equestrian master and founder of the academic art of riding. Dressage became a part of royal education, also for philosophical purposes. Training a horse was seen as getting to know oneself and as a noble task. To quote Podhajsky, a former director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna from 1939 to 1965:

'Equestrian art, perhaps more than any other, is closely related to the wisdom of life. Many of the same principles may be applied as a line of conduct to follow. The horse teaches us self-control, constancy, and the ability to understand what goes on in the mind and the feelings of another

creature, qualities that are important throughout our lives. Moreover, from this relationship with his horse the rider will learn that only kindness and mutual understanding will bring about achievements of highest perfection. (...) To be successful the rider must be able to distinguish between cause and effect. The effect will be easy to see, but the cause will be recognised only through knowledge, which is supplied by theory.’⁹²

During the middle ages and the Renaissance and Baroque periods, cavalry was used as an addition to the infantry. Knights would engage in battle with knights in one-to-one combats, or attack infantry. In Western Europe, the knightly cavalry usually bore swords, lances and spears. Longbow men were used on the battlefield, but these bows were too long to be used on horseback. Knights would therefore have to be capable of riding their horses one handed.

In those times, mass cavalry attacks were unusual on the battlefield. This type of warfare was only used by the Central Asian steppe peoples, who employed different approaches and methods in horse training, and used bows as weapons.⁹³

Developing from this sort of combat, cavalry could be used in the Renaissance period as a weapon against infantry. Therefore the art of the classical airs above the ground, like the levade, courbette and capriole could be performed on the battlefield. In the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the ‘airs above the ground’ were one of the training aims. These ‘airs’ were used on the battlefield to fight off infantry.

⁹² A. Podhajsky, *The Complete Training of Horse and Rider in the Principles of Classical Horsemanship* (Doubleday & Company, USA 1967) 20 – 21.

⁹³ B. Karayev, ‘Impact Turkmen Mounted Archers on Modern Warfare’, Published at www.newscentralasia.com on July 18, 2004.

These ‘high school airs’ are practised to this day at the famous classical institutes such as the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, Austria, the Cadre Noir in Saumur, France, or the Real Escuela in Jerez de la Frontera, Spain. On Renaissance and Baroque paintings and drawings, horses are shown performing these ‘airs’ on the battle field.⁹⁴

During the 80 Years War, various paintings were made of Dutch stadtholders on Spanish horses, and after this war, the Dutch elite is shown on various paintings performing high school airs, the levade and mezzair being preferred, together with movements like the piaffe or passage. This lasted until about the first half of the 19th Century, after which English horses came into fashion.⁹⁵ It is the German horse trainer Steinbrecht who complains, in his book on German classical dressage *Das Gymnasium des Pferdes*, about the influence of English horses on the German cavalry horses. The English thoroughbred gained popularity because of its superb ability to canter and gallop, which are not qualities attributed to the Baroque riding horses.⁹⁶

In the meantime, the horse’s duty had changed in cavalry actions from facing other cavalry in close combat to large regiment combat formations in which speed and mobility of the unit were most important. In the Prussian army,

⁹⁴ R. de Leeuw, *In het zadel – het Nederlands ruiterportret van 1550 – 1900* (‘s-Hertogenbosch, 1980) (Catalogue of Exposition in 1980) which shows horses and riders from 1550 – 1900, almost all horses are shown in ‘high school airs’ like the Levade or Mezzair. In the Hollandsche Rijschool in Amsterdam even ‘pillars’ were erected to train the horses. (Bakhuysen in 1750 painted the ‘Interior of the Hollandsche Rijschool at the Schans in Amsterdam showing horses between the pillars or under their riders performing these exercises).

⁹⁵ De Leeuw (1980) 29.

⁹⁶ Baroque horses have a different build than the Thoroughbred horses. Thoroughbred horses have long striding gaits, baroque horses have short striding gaits and move upwards instead of forward. This type of horses is especially bred for high school movements such as the Airs above the ground, while the Thoroughbred horse is less capable of such features, but is faster.

horses were used to pull cannons while the rest of the cavalry followed. In the battles of the 19th and early 20th century, the British and Prussian cavalry merely fought their enemies through large frontal attacks supported by gun fire. In these battles the Spanish and other Baroque horses, like the Friesian, were of no use because of their short striding gaits. So, in Northern Europe, the English Thoroughbred became the leading horse breed together with sturdy German and Russian breeds which were able to move fast and pull a lot of weight. The English Thoroughbred horse originates from Eastern horse breeds, such as the Turkish and Barb horses.

This had consequences for other breeds. In Spain and Portugal, Baroque riding horses for example were still used for shepherding and in the sport of bullfighting or in the Doma Clásica (classical dressage). The Lipizzaner became an endangered horse breed. Nowadays there are only an estimated 5000 left throughout the world. The Dutch Friesian horse, also a Baroque riding horse, became almost extinct in the 20th century. The Spanish Pura Raza Española and the Portugese Lusitano horse were only exported to other European countries from the 1980s and the best horses of this type are still held by the Spanish or Portuguese elite.

During the 19th and 20th century, a basic training (or dressage training) evolved, which included the necessary exercises for training cavalry horses. Even ‘high school’ training was considered necessary for cavalry horses to improve their performance. As Robertson tells us:

‘A graceful position, a fairly good seat, to use the saber and pistol (this excellently well, too) on horseback, to mount at a gallop, and one or two other accomplishments of a similar nature, and there our horsemanship

and knowledge of the horse end, the latter never passing zero during the whole time. On the frontier this is supplemented by such information as individual ambition or research, or accident, may supply.

The refinements of equitation, however, the principles of the haute ecole, as it is called abroad, we neglect almost entirely. With such exercises as the "piaffe," "pirouette," "circling on the forehand," "changing of hand," the "volte," the different "passages," and many other exercises in the "setting-up" of horse and rider, we never bother ourselves. Yet they are considered the A B C of his profession by even the youngest cavalry "sub" abroad, and certainly no horseman calls himself really accomplished without being able to perform them.

In no other way can he reach the end supposed to be desirable with every cavalryman, of communicating to his charger his every impulse, of making him obedient and ready to act instantly and according to his will in every emergency, in short, of making his steed and himself, as nearly as possible, one.⁹⁷

Horse training was originally conceived to train horses for battle. Horses needed to be versatile and swift in order to be used in this way and to be extremely obedient to bit and to rider's aids (hands, weight and legs). To explain, in modern terms:

‘Many [dressage] exercises have been designed to cause the horse to bend either one or both hind legs. The ultimate goal is to get the horse to bend both hind legs the same amount at the same time. If the horse bends the hind legs evenly, the horse takes equal weight on each hind leg.

⁹⁷ Appendix A, lines 46 – 61.

Here, the aesthetic meets the practical. If the horse takes weight evenly on both hind legs, it will move in balance. As a result, the horse's soundness is preserved and the gaits are livelier. Because the forehand is lighter, the shoulder is freed and the front legs can stretch out. The extended trot is an impressive display of this. The horse seems to dance because the strides are light and effortless. The horse will also be able to stop or turn immediately upon the rider's request, which was vital in combat situations.'⁹⁸

In equestrian terms, a horse is moving 'downhill' if a horse has more weight on its forehand. It is more difficult to make this horse stop or turn: it would be like trying stopping a lorry moving downhill. It is imbalanced and its impetus drives it forward. If however it places its hind legs more under its body, then, as a result of the *Hankenbiegung*, as it is called, the horse's forehand is lifted a bit and it will be moving 'uphill'. Now the weight is shifted that bit more to the hind quarters and the horse is carrying itself. The horse will be easier to stop or turn. The horse appears to be more balanced and 'collected'.

A number of exercises are required to supple the horse's hind quarters in order to enable it to put weight on its haunches and to make it more versatile. Some of these exercises are shown in the appendices. The exercise in Appendix ... is a Shoulder-in which is a side movement exercise, first 'discovered' by Gueriniere, although it might precede his time (17th Century). Other side movements are the traversale, renvers and travers: these were conceived to make the horse more manoeuvrable and eventually result in a canter pirouette (turn on the haunches), which is of course extremely valuable in combat. The

⁹⁸ Hodges, Cynthia M.A., *Dressage: Classical Equitation* op:
<http://www.angelfire.com/sports/dressage/pages/balance.html> (Last visited: 25 March 2012).

side movements are naturally of great value as well because they make the horse move sideward, which may be quite useful, for example when one needs to evade enemy attacks.

Xenophon also understood that the horse should never be trained through force or fear. This makes the horse fearful of its own rider and a horse that is trained through fear will let down his rider whenever it becomes unsure or afraid of something. It will in fact always equate the rider with fear and never dare to trust the rider. In such moments, the horse will not be inclined to stay with the rider and will want to escape.⁹⁹ Xenophon's approach therefore was not from an animal-loving perspective; it was, in actual fact, lifesaving.

‘If a man wants to make a useful war-horse look more stately and showy when ridden, he must avoid pulling his mouth with the bit, and using the spur and whip, means by which most people imagine that they show off a horse. In point of fact the results they produce are the very opposite of what they intend. For by dragging the mouth up they blind their horses instead of letting them see ahead, and by spurring and whipping, flurry them so that they are startled and get into danger. That is the behaviour of horses that strongly object to being ridden and that behave in an ugly and unseemly fashion.’¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ PH 10.1 – 5.

¹⁰⁰ PH 10.7; Here Xenophon warns against what is unfortunately happening today in horse competitions. Dr Gerd Heuschmann observes: ‘According to the saying ‘You can’t make an omelette without breaking an egg’ many of today’s competitive riders engage in pulling, squeezing, jerking, and more. And, since the equestrian media frequently focuses on images of high performance competitors, it then appears that such riding is exemplary for all. This is not the case! (...) Competitive dressage as a sport has grown by leaps and bounds during the last decades. More and more riders – including many beginners – want to test their ability against their competitors, prove their skills and be rewarded. Unfortunately, however, some ardent devotees to the sport lack the necessary knowledge and skills. (...) The real task of a rider, which is to train a horse, has taken a back seat. As a consequence, more and more horses

Drawing on Xenophon's work, various exercises were conceived and passed on over time. Exercises which in fact better prepare the horse for its task to carry a rider and for it to understand how it must respond to certain aids and movements which are not natural to the horse but which are vital if the horse is to be used for cavalry purposes. The purpose at all times is to enhance the horse's understanding so that it may be easier for the rider to guide the horse and to remain mounted. A collected horse is a horse on which one may sit with ease. Xenophon describes this by stating that a properly collected horse is essential in order for the horse to be capable of turning on the spot (*strophein* in Greek) without falling or throwing off the rider.

‘But if you teach the horse to go with a slack bridle, to hold his neck up and to arch it towards the head, you will cause the horse to do the very things in which he himself delights and takes the greatest pleasure. (...) Whenever, therefore, you induce him to carry himself in the attitudes he naturally assumes when he is most anxious to display his beauty, you make him look as though he took pleasure in being ridden, and give him a noble, fierce, and attractive appearance. How we think that these effects may be produced we will now try to explain.’¹⁰¹

In his work, *On Horsemanship*, Xenophon sets the basis for what in our time became known as ‘classical dressage’. Dressage that was conceived from the

develop health problems because they're used incorrectly and are overstrained. The steadily rising number of equine veterinarians and hospitals are proof of this development. One pays a high price for the achievements gained in the show ring, at the horse's expense.’ (G. Heuschmann, *Tug of War Classical Versus Modern Dressage: Why Classical Training Works and How Incorrect Riding Negatively Affects Horses' Health* (J.A. Allen, London 2007) 21 – 23).

¹⁰¹ PH 10.3-5.

necessity of preparing the horse for the battlefield and for what we now call military horsemanship. Training the horse in an established manner, without breaking the horse physically or in spirit, will make it possible for the horse to perform its task on the battlefield in close cooperation with the rider and with full confidence in its master. A fearful horse will not succeed in doing this and that is why a horse must be trained with respect, so that it continues to trust its rider. Only then will the horse look truly handsome, though this is of secondary importance.

[6] For what a horse does under constraint, as Simon says, he does without understanding, and with no more grace than a dancer would show if he was whipped and goaded. Under such treatment horse and man alike will do much more that is ugly than graceful. No, a horse must make the most graceful and brilliant appearance in all respects of his own will with the help of aids. [7] Further, if you gallop him during a ride until he sweats freely, and as soon as he prances in fine style, quickly dismount and unbridle him, you may be sure that he will come willingly to the prance. [8]

This is the attitude in which artists represent the horses on which gods and heroes ride, and men who manage such horses gracefully have a magnificent appearance. [9] Indeed a prancing horse is a thing so graceful, terrible and astonishing that it rivets the gaze of all beholders, young and old alike. At all events no one leaves him or is tired of gazing at him so long as he shows off his brilliance.¹⁰²

As stated above, in classical horsemanship, a horse is trained with respect for its nature based also on its temperament so that it may perform its work optimally

¹⁰² PH 11. 6 – 9.

and with full confidence in its rider. This will require collection, which comes with training, not only in the ring but also on land and in jumping. Neither should the horse ever be broken by use of the spur, whip and bridle, because it will turn against the rider and endanger him or her. Xenophon can therefore be regarded as the founder of Classical Dressage, because of his emphasis on the key principles of collection and respect for the horse. Add to this classical training of the rider and horse also ground training and horse jumping training, about which Xenophon also writes in his books. He regards these methods of training in combination with dressage training as comprehensive training for rider and horse alike. It makes for a secure seat and a fearless rider, and a horse that will be competent on all kinds of surfaces and in every situation.

When a horse is no longer being trained, it loses its manoeuvrability. If well-trained previously, a horse might regain its agility quite easily but it will be slow to reach its former level of suppleness, if at all.

2.4. Natural horsemanship

In the 19th Century, the Hungarian hussars were considered natural horsemen: ‘as Hungarians, the hussars were born horsemen, therefore not too much effort was expended on their training; they remained natural horsemen.’¹⁰³ These people never developed a theoretical or scientific approach to horse training.

¹⁰³ Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen, *Aus meinem Leben: Aufzeichnungen des Prinzen Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen* [From My Life: Chronicles of Prince Kraft of Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen], ed., Arved von Teichman und Logischen. (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1897-1907, vol. 1) 257-9, 280-2.

Riders in the mountainous parts of Spain needed a swift horse capable of collection¹⁰⁴ for their cattle herding tasks, bullfighting and mountain guerrilla warfare. They had to be capable of manoeuvring in enclosed spaces or on mountain rigs. Therefore Portugal and Spain produced a horse to which collection comes naturally.

Riding with a certain degree of collection is typical for horsemen who have to operate in enclosed spaces. In spacious Britain most equestrians prefer eventing, hunting or racing instead of dressage. In the words of Seamus Hayes:

'An Irish businessman who rides before breakfast to prepare himself for a day in the office, pulls on a pair of gum boots, rides out into the countryside on his not very highly schooled horse, and skylarks over a half a dozen fences. He returns, red in face and blissfully happy, to start the day's work. An Englishman would do much the same but his dress and his horse would be a bit smarter, and he would bear in mind the principles he had learned in Pony Club. A German, on the other hand, would ride in the indoor school under instruction from his riding master, carrying two dressage whips, one in each hand, to get the hocks well under. And when he has spent an hour achieving perfect obedience and accuracy he is absolutely prepared for his day's work.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ "Collection is necessary for work in the shortened tempo of the paces, and for the performance of short turns and smooth halts. The horse in collection must step with his hind legs well under his body, which can be recognised by the fact that the tracks of the hind feet come into or in front of those of the forefeet. This will make the horse arch his back correctly and carry his head higher, thus becoming shorter in his body. Collection requires an increased bend of the joints of the hind legs and furthers the physical training of the horse." (Podhajsky (1967) 46)

¹⁰⁵ Irish horseman and showjumpertrainer Seamus Hayes in a lecture on horsemanship in the '80s.

Nowadays Hungarian riders demonstrate their equestrian skills in shows on the puszta. Their horsemanship equals the Mongolian method and bears an undeniable resemblance to the Scythian horsemanship described by sources in antiquity: archers able to fire their missiles at the gallop, mounted sword fighting and javelin throwing. In Antiquity, the Persians and Assyrians used their horses as a moving platform to fire missiles or to pursue, both of which skills are particularly needed on plains. These peoples used horses that were versatile and fast. What they needed most was a galloping horse.

Some peoples are traditionally more horse-minded than others and are also more likely to become experts in riding and handling horses because of their upbringing.

Aelian puts it like this:

‘to control an Indian Horse, to check him when he leaps forward and would gallop away, has not, it seems, been given to every man, but only to those who have been brought up from childhood to manage horses.’¹⁰⁶

Likewise, the Numidians in Hannibal’s army rode their horses with a rein fastened unto a halter without a bit and they seemed to be able to almost effortlessly turn their horses, chase their enemies and throw the javelin in battle.¹⁰⁷ This does not mean, however, that these people do not train their horses at all; to quote Aelian on Persian horse training:

¹⁰⁶ Aelian 13.9.

¹⁰⁷ Strabo 17.3.7 on the Maurusiani (Libyan people, also called Numidae) ‘Their horsemen fight mostly with a javelin, using bridles made of rush and riding bareback, but they also carry

‘In order that their Horses may not panic, the Persians accustom them to noises and the clang of bronze, and sound them so that in war they may never be afraid of the rattle of full armour and the clash of swords upon shields. And they throw dummy corpses stuffed with straw beneath their feet in order that they may get used to trampling on corpses in war and may not through terror at some unnerving occurrence be useless in encountering men-at-arms. Nor did this escape the notice of Homer, as he himself shows.

At any rate we learn in our childhood from the Iliad (10.486) how the Thracian Rhesus and his companions with him were slain. This is the story we learn. The son of Tydeus slaughters the Thracians, while the son of Laertes draws the slain men away by the feet for fear lest the Thracian horses, being newcomers, get entangled among the dead bodies and panic, and through being unused to them may leap aside as though they were treading upon some terrifying objects. But once horses have learnt a thing, they will not forget what they have learnt, so clever are they at learning whatever is of any advantage.’¹⁰⁸

Generally such riders are less theoretically educated in their riding. They are not trying to gain a full control over their horse, rather they are training the horse to

daggers.’ (...) ‘The Libyans in general, dress alike and are similar in all other respects, using horses that are small but swift and so ready to obey that they are governed with a small rod. The horses wear collars made of wood (i.e. tree-wood) or hair to which the rein is fastened, though some even follow without being led, like dogs.’; This concurs with 19th century observations: ‘The Bedouin never uses a bit or bridle of any sort, but instead, a halter with a fine chain passing round the nose. With this he controls his mare easily and effectually. He rides on a pad of cotton, fastened on the mare's back by a surcingle, and uses no stirrups. This pad is the most uncomfortable and insecure seat imaginable, but fortunately the animals are nearly always gentle and without vice. I have never seen either violent plunging, rearing, or indeed any serious attempt made to throw the rider.’ (Lady Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates (part I) (orig pub in 1879) edited, with a preface and some account of the Arabs and their horses by W.S. Blunt in two volumes, Volume II* (Frank Cass & CO. Ltd. 1968) Chapter 28, on horses.)

¹⁰⁸ Aelian 16.25.

suit their purpose; this tends to mean obedience in all three gaits, stopping and turning would be enough. These riders use horses that are agile and intelligent by nature. Only horses that are naturally prone to subtle aids like Thoroughbreds, Arabians and other hot bloods like the Akhal Teke from Turkmenistan will respond to these without training.

2.5. Tack

How to stay on a horse without saddle

Xenophon time and again mentions the necessity of having a firm seat and he reveals the secret of how to stay on a horse in combat without stirrups or a saddle.¹⁰⁹ In *On Horsemanship* he writes:

‘Since it is necessary that the rider should have a firm seat when riding at top speed over all sorts of country, and should be able to use his weapons properly on horseback, the practice of horsemanship by hunting is to be recommended where the country is suitable and big game is to be found. Where these conditions are lacking, it is a good method of training for two riders to work together thus: one flies on his horse over all kinds of ground and retreats, reversing his spear so that it points backwards, while the other pursues, having buttons on his javelins and holding his spear in the same position, and when he gets within javelin shot, tries to hit the fugitive with the blunted weapons, and if he gets near enough to use his spear, strikes his captive with it.

It is also a good plan, in case of a collision between them, for one to pull his adversary towards him and suddenly push him back again, since that is the way to dismount him. The right thing for the man who is being pulled is to urge his horse forward; by doing this the pulled is more likely to unhorse the puller than to be unhorsed himself.’¹¹⁰

Dom Duarte tells us why a steady seat is so important and also how one can avoid being thrown off a horse, especially in combat situations. He

¹⁰⁹ Cyr 8.1.35.

¹¹⁰ PH 8.10 – 11.

puts forward his thoughts and experiences on this subject in his book on knightly horsemanship:

‘I said before that we can fall off the beast forward, backward or to the either side of the beast, a consequence of any action we take, like handling or throwing a spear, striking with a sword, or any similar which we do not master as we should.

It is a fact that most of the men who fall from the beast during a battle, a joust, a collision with an obstacle or due to a wilful action from an opponent, are unable to avoid it due to lack of knowledge and will, and do not act as they should have; and most of them fall down because they could not get the proper help from their own bodies, legs, feet and hands. I am not saying all of them, because some suffer such violent collisions that it would have been impossible for them to stay mounted even if they were strong. (...)

There are some who get so excited about doing specific actions (like handling and throwing a spear) that, due to impatience and ignorance, they forget how they should behave to stay mounted, and fall off the beast. I have seen a few falling down for exactly that reason: they grasp the spear so strongly that they are unable to handle it for a long time and when they are physically forced to let it fall down to the ground, they also go down, keeping it company; others throw the spear with so much energy that they get unbalanced and follow it out of the saddle! Similar situations might happen when striking with a sword or doing any other thing; for lack of the necessary skills, many get unbalanced and fall down from the beast.’¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Dom Duarte (1438, in translation of Preto 2005) 36 – 37.

Without stirrups, a rider consequently would not be at a disadvantage. If a horse is trained correctly, riding without saddle or stirrups becomes much easier, because of the ‘collection’. The lack of stirrups apparently never caused problems for people in Antiquity, and they consequently never invented them. For example, Ancient Germanic warriors considered riding with a saddle(cloth) lazy and unmanly. According to Caesar, they looked down on cavalry which rode on saddles or saddlecloths.¹¹²

The Romans had solved the problem that not every horseman is capable of acquiring a good seat by inventing the horned saddle, which gives a rider a steady seat even if he is not a very good rider by nature. It even gives a rider a steady seat on a horse that is galloping and therefore not collected.

A modern parallel to ancient cavalry training is to be found in the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. These riders still ride without stirrups at least once a week to make sure they will not lose their good seat and posture. Riding without stirrups is beneficial to seat and posture. It relaxes the leg muscles and the horse itself makes the rider feel his faults: whenever the rider tries to hang on with cramped muscles, he will fall off at the slightest move of the horse. When the rider relaxes and lets his legs hang down, he will effortlessly follow his horse. This is also known as ‘sticking to the saddle’.

Finally, having no stirrups is not necessarily regarded as a ‘lack’. In combat situations, stirrups might even cause problems for a rider. If he falls off or is pulled or pushed off his horse, his foot might get caught in the stirrup. He then runs the risk of being dragged by his horse at a gallop. A rider can also jump off quicker without stirrups.

¹¹² Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 4.2.

Again the Spanish Riding School is our best parallel: here the horses are trained by Renaissance methods for an active role on the battlefield. The exercises are known as the ‘airs above the ground’. Traditionally these airs are performed by a rider who is mounted without stirrups. The stirrups are removed to prevent a rider from being caught in them if he falls off his horse or to prevent him from getting trapped under his horse if it should fall. Without stirrups, he can jump off quicker. Although the ‘haute-ecole’ theoretically originates from the training of battle-horses, the requirements on the battlefield were not always that sophisticated.

Likewise, scholars tend to believe that mounting a horse without stirrups is difficult. In reality the process of mounting with stirrups is rather slow. Simply jumping on a horse is far quicker and it is one of the first abilities a rider had to master, because during an enemy raid there just was not enough time to get on a horse.¹¹³ As we have seen before, an average ancient horse measured 135 – 155 cm, so for a healthy adult it would hardly have been an effort to jump on his horse, even if these men were only 160 cm tall. Nowadays, in the sport called ‘vaulting’, or ‘voltige’ in Dutch, young girls and boys jump on cantering horses, using a special technique: they run along the horse in the same rhythm as its stride, then they propel themselves using the energy of the horse and finally jump on the horse.

Bridles

As said above, collection is necessary in order to guide the horse and for the rider to be properly seated. It will prove difficult to remain seated on an

¹¹³ In the 19th Century, too, mounting a horse at the gallop was practised in the US and European armies (Appendix A lines 47-48).

uncollected horse. It is also important to prevent the horse from falling in difficult manoeuvres. The bit was invented as a refinement in the collection process.

In Appendix G modern and ancient bridles are shown.

A modern cavalry bridle is a combination of a snaffle and curb bit or a pelham bit, which combines the effect of the snaffle and curb. Usually the horse is ridden on the snaffle rein, but if the rider needs more control or needs to stop his horse, the curb rein is used. A military cavalry horse is ridden one handed. A cavalryman should be able to present and use his sabre on the horse and ride his horse with the other hand.¹¹⁴

During the ages, the bridles changed. Throughout the Renaissance period, we see riders using a kandare (curb bit) and riding one handed. The horse is trained to perform the high school movements to the highest collection in order to enable participation in knightly combat (which was close combat).

The 18th century saw a change in the role of the horse on the battlefield: the larger regiments needed to cover greater distances and were used for large frontal attacks on the enemy lines. The horses no longer needed to be able to turn on the spot and therefore collection was no longer considered necessary. The larger English and German horses found their way into the Western European armies. They were capable of large movements and speed but were harder to collect. With them came the Weymouth or double bridle, which consists of a bridoon and curb bit. These bridles are used nowadays in dressage sport.

Examples of this development are found in art paintings from the period prior to the 18th century in which we observe the use of kandare bridles. After the 18th

¹¹⁴ Maj. H.A.R. Kampen, *Militair Ruiterbewijs*, Defensie 2006, 8 – 9.

century the type of horses tends to change and the Weymouth bridle is introduced. The kandare disappears.

In the Baroque period, horses were ridden on one bit only, but this practice was discontinued later on when not only was size regarded as important but also the ability of the horse to move forward. This gave rise to the double bridle, which benefitted both the movement and that collection.

2.6. Competitions and shows

During Mediaeval and Renaissance times, knights used to engage in tournaments during peacetime in order to maintain their training and horsemanship. In modern times, something similar is done. What nowadays is called ‘Three-day-eventing’, used to be called ‘The Military’. Eventing receives its roots from the Military and in the first years of its existence this sport was aptly named ‘The Military’. Eventing was first introduced in 1912 at the Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden. The purpose of the sport was to test the precision, elegance and obedience of army horses on the parade ground, as well as the stamina and courage of the horse in battle. Another aim was to put to the test the horses’ fitness, versatility and obedience. At first only army officers on military chargers could compete in the sport but by 1924, civilians were allowed to compete at the Paris Olympics.¹¹⁵

The *military* or *three-day-eventing* test includes:

a dressage test ‘The test consists of a series of compulsory movements at walk, trot and canter gaits, within a rectangular arena 60 m. long and 20 m. wide. To perform a good Dressage test, the horse needs to be flexible and fluid. To keep the strong Eventing horses under the firm control required by the exacting Dressage movements involves great knowledge and understanding’;

a cross country test: ‘The focus of the entire event is on the Cross-Country test, the objective of which is to prove the speed, endurance and jumping ability of the horse, while at the same time demonstrating the rider’s knowledge of pace and the use of his horse. This is the most difficult part

¹¹⁵ <http://www.hartpury.ac.uk/eventing/eventing> (last visited 12 February 2012).

of the test consisting in a course, usually twice the distance of the steeplechase, comprising 30 to 40 Jumping efforts on natural solid obstacles, such as stone walls, woodpiles, water, ditches, etc. The aim is to jump all the fences within the limits of the time allowed;'

and a jumping test: 'to prove that the horses have retained their suppleness, energy and obedience in order to jump a course of 10 to 13 obstacles'.¹¹⁶

These competitions and challenges enable both rider and horse to develop in a multifaceted manner and to respond more and more to each other's needs. It allows for the rider to retain a good seat and for the horse to remain confident and ready to respond to unexpected situations.

In the 19th Century, a US cavalry colonel also wanted to start up a competition in equestrian sports to motivate his cavalry men:

'(...) to develop in our corps that love for equestrianism and mounted sport which alone can render it entirely worthy of outside admiration, or entitle us to be proud of it. (...) At all large posts, and especially Leavenworth, let officers aspire to have good horses; let their training be the pride and pastime of their owners. Let clubs for the promotion of steeple-coursing and the hunt, wherever the latter is practicable, be formed, and let skilful feats of horsemanship and a love for the saddle as a means of pleasure be encouraged(...) In fact, a thorough knowledge of the horse should be considered essential from motives dictated by both duty and pleasure. Few officers have any idea how much amusement can be derived from work of this kind, or how much the dullest garrison at

¹¹⁶ FEI (Federation Equestre Internationale) on http://www.fei.org/DISCIPLINES/EVENTING/ABOUT_EVENTING/Pages/What_Is_Eventing.aspx (last visited: 13 august 2009).

which there are half a dozen devotees of such sport can be enlivened by it.¹¹⁷

2.7. Summary on horsemanship

We may now conclude that there are a number of decisive factors that determine the success of the cavalry on the battlefield.

Horsemanship requires not only the ability to ride a horse, but also knowledge of the horse itself. Add to this the need for a trainer to be aware of the possibilities of the horse in terms of its character and its build, the need for a bridle that is most suited to both horse and rider, and exercises to prepare the horse and the rider for their task. Likewise, in the case of a cavalry horse, knowledge of how a cavalry detachment is best served on the battlefield. Horsemanship is therefore a craft which takes up a very significant amount of time.

The following factors are all important aspects of horsemanship. Aspects which in fact are also regarded as important to the horse riding knowledge of today and for this reason I rely on examples from modern times.

A rider not only needs to buy a good horse but the horse needs to be properly trained, without being subjected to pain or fear or to training that will break it physically. The horse after all represents an investment for the cavalry and the longer it can be of service, the better for the cavalry. A horse that has suffered

¹¹⁷ See appendix A lines 314-317; 323-328; 335-340.

at the hands of people or its rider will be inclined not to work with them but rather against them.

For this reason, the training of young horses is better left to the experts and not to any person regardless.

A rider needs to use his weapons correctly and efficiently, to opt for the appropriate bridle and to have a steady seat in all sorts of terrain, and he needs to exercise regularly so as to keep both his horse and himself fit. It is a full-time job.

Men who are not intrinsically motivated to keep up their equestrian skills have to be motivated by competitions and shows to perform with their horses. This is also a good way to train the cavalry during times of peace. In fact, shows and competitions can be a good way to estimate the performance of the cavalrymen and for determining their level of horsemanship. The purpose of military and classical horsemanship is at all times to improve the collection of the horse and therefore its rideability. Throughout the ages, the horse has continued to be given a greater role to play on the battlefield and had to become easier to ride and manoeuvre. Collection only waned in significance in the 19th century, when huge land armies were compelled to cover large distances, with horses being used merely for transport or for charging purposes.

Chapter 3. Greek Cavalry Warfare

3.1. Introduction

First we need to determine the level of horsemanship of the Greek cavalry on the battlefield. I do this by taking a look at the cavalry battles and determining the various styles of horsemanship that were applied, which includes the use of the cavalry and tactics. It is also worth examining whether there was any development over the centuries in the use of Greek cavalry on the battlefield. The development of horsemanship is directly linked to the fielding of cavalry on the battlefield.

The specific purpose of this chapter therefore is to draw a comparison between the various Greek and non-Greek cities or peoples so as to determine how they developed the cavalry and what their level of horsemanship was. In so doing, I hope to arrive at a conclusion regarding the influence they had on each other. I will be discussing the period from the Archaic period up to the Battle at Mantinea in 362 BC.

3.2. Archaic period

Some scholars argue that archaic cavalry existed only as mounted infantry that did not fight on horseback, but rather dismounted before battle: ‘Literary and iconographic evidence suggests that most horse-owners dismounted for combat and fought on foot throughout the Archaic period.’¹¹⁸ On archaic vase paintings cavalrymen often wear hoplite armour and are accompanied by squires who, so it is argued, hold the horses during battle. These squires themselves are most of the time mounted. Remarkably enough these squires are confined to archaic paintings only, and consequently may only have existed in the Archaic period, which would indicate that mounted hoplites in those times were not cavalrymen.

Greek infantry apparently also used squires or servants, not only to serve their masters but also in combat. According to Herodotus, the Cypriot leader Onesilos (died 497 BC), when fighting the Persians (from whom he rebelled) was aided by a servant who was also his squire. Onesilos once asked his squire who would he prefer to kill: the Persian commander Artybius or his horse. The squire responded: ‘servants are supposed to attack servants,’ which meant that he, being a servant, should kill the horse.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ H. van Wees, *Greek Warfare – Myths and Realities* (London 2004) 67.

¹¹⁹ Her 5.111 – 112. Onesilos was the brother of king Gorgos (Gorgus) of the Greek city-state of Salamis on the island of Cyprus, which about 500 BC was a part of the Persian empire. When the Ionians rebelled from Persian rule, Onesilos used the occasion to capture the city of Salamis and usurp his brother’s throne; he was able to win every city on the island except for the Graeco-Phoenician city-state of Amathus, which stayed loyal to the Persians. In 497 BC, the Persians, with the help of the Phoenician navy, mounted an attack on Cyprus. Some of the Ionian colonies sent ships to assist Onesilos. In the ensuing battle, the Ionian fleet was able to defeat the Phoenician navy. Onesilos then led an army against the Persian general, Artybius. While Artybius was killed, the Persians won the battle during which Onesilos was killed too. As a result, the Ionian fleet retreated from Cyprus and five months later, the Persians regained control of Cyprus. Onesilos’ brother, Gorgus Chersides, was then reinstated by the Persians as king of Salamis.

Worley thinks that during the Messenian Wars in the 7th century BC Spartan and Messenian *hippeis* joined the fighting.¹²⁰ In Sicily, archaeologists have discovered an archaic Greek saddlecloth.¹²¹

There is some agreement on the existence of light and heavy cavalry in archaic Greece.¹²² It is my contention that the squires may also have served as light cavalry. When the ground was not suitable for cavalry action, the hoplite warrior could fight on foot and leave his horse with the squires or light cavalry.

In my view, mounted cavalry must have existed in archaic Greece. In ‘The Shield of Heracles,’ Hesiod (8th century BC) describes a pre-Homeric battle between armies with chariots and mounted horsemen such as Perseus¹²³.

Greenhalgh makes reference to archaeological evidence which indicates that in the Mycenaean period, chariots and mounted horses functioned together.¹²⁴

Greek authors did not find fault with mounted horses in the Bronze Age. Pausanias writes: ‘The Thessalians too of Pharsalos dedicated an Achilles on horseback with Patroklos running beside his horse.’¹²⁵

In the classical period, however, writers speak of *hippokomoi* who took care of the horses in service of cavalrymen and who accompanied them on a march.¹²⁶

Xenophon refers to mounted grooms and he recommends their use in order to make a cavalry regiment appear larger by giving them imitation lances and a

¹²⁰ Worley (1994) 24 – 25.

¹²¹ G. Szeliga, *A Representation of an Archaic Greek Saddle-Cloth from Sicily* in *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 87, No. 4. (Oct., 1983), 545-547.

¹²² Worley (1994) 48 and 58; Gaebel (2002) 57 shows examples of archaic vasepaintings on which light and heavy cavalry are shown. See also M. Schaefer, *Zwischen Adelsethos und Demokratie, Archäologische Quellen zu den Hippeis im archaischen und klassischen Athen* (München 2002).

¹²³ Hesiod, *Aspis Herakleous* 216.

¹²⁴ Greenhalgh (1973) 45 – 47.

¹²⁵ Pausanias 10.13.5.

¹²⁶ Hell 2.4.6.

position in the cavalry ranks.¹²⁷ If such cases, they could be riding substitute horses.

Xenophon dismounted during the campaign through Persia when the terrain had become too difficult for his horse. From there, he went on foot.¹²⁸ Apparently a servant led the horse until Xenophon could mount again, as later on, he is on horseback again.¹²⁹ Some time later he was on foot once more, leading the rearguard, but when important events took place he again mounted his horse.¹³⁰

The Lydians, who were renowned horse riders, dismounted when it became clear that Cyrus the Great had camouflaged his camels as horses and put them to fight. Cyrus feared the Lydian cavalry and in this way tried to evade a cavalry battle. As he had expected, the Lydian horses smelled the camels and tried to run away. The Lydian cavalry could not attack and dismounted. According to Herodotus this was a brave thing to do.¹³¹

Xenophon also writes in his *Memorabilia*: ‘And again, will you pay much attention to bringing down as many of the enemy as possible without dismounting?’¹³² Apparently, like their archaic predecessors, Greek cavalymen from classical times did not fight consistently on horseback; at times they would dismount. Greek cavalry from all three periods, archaic, classical and Hellenistic, fought in both ways, on foot or on horseback.

In the fourth century, the Lacedaimonian cavalry commander, Pasimachos, dismounted and tied his cavalry’s horses to trees, after having noticed that the allied Sicyonian infantry had come under pressure. He took their shields marked with **S** and went against the Argives with a voluntary force consisting

¹²⁷ CC 5.6.

¹²⁸ Xen. *Anabasis* 3.4.49.

¹²⁹ Xen. *Anabasis* 3.5.4.

¹³⁰ Xen. *Anabasis* 4.7.24.

¹³¹ Her 1.80.

¹³² Mem 3.3.7; 5.77.

of his horsemen. The Argives thought that these were Sicyonians and underestimated them. Of course the Argives lost, not being able to fight Spartans out in the open.¹³³

In the fourth century BC, Alexander the Great, who ruled from 336-323 BC, ordered his *Hetairoi*¹³⁴ to grab their shields, mount and attack a hill; after having reached it, half of them were to dismount and continue fighting on foot. This also happened in emergencies as Xenophon describes in his *Hellenica*: ‘In fact, even the cavalry did guard duty by night, (...) keeping with them both their horses and their shields’.¹³⁵ In this way, cavalrymen were deployable as cavalry as well as infantry.

Iberian cavalrymen were used to first destroy the enemy cavalry and subsequently to dismount in order to finish off the enemy infantry. Diodorus Siculus regarded this way of fighting as ingenious: ‘[The Celtiberians], able as they are to fight in two styles, they first carry on the contest on horseback, and when they have defeated the enemy cavalry they dismount, and assuming the role of foot-soldiers they put up marvellous battles’.¹³⁶

Plutarch praises Philopoemen because he dismounted in order to help out the frontlines in battle. Plutarch writes:

¹³³ Hell 4.4.10.

¹³⁴ Arrian, *Anabasis Alexandros* 1.6.5; 3.1.4; 3.27.4.

¹³⁵ Hell 2.4.24.

¹³⁶ Diodorus Siculus 5.33.2 ‘The Celtiberians provide for war not only excellent cavalry’; Diodorus Siculus 5.33.5: ‘able as they are to fight in two styles, they first carry on the contest on horseback, and when they have defeated the cavalry they dismount and assuming the role of foot-soldiers they put up marvellous battles’.

Philopoemen was stationed among the Macedonian cavalry with his own fellow-citizens, and had as a support the Illyrians, a large body of good fighters, who closed up the line of battle. They had been ordered to lie quietly in reserve until, from the other wing, a signal should be made by the king with a scarlet coat stretched upon a spear. But the Illyrians, at the command of their officers, tried to force back the Lacedaemonians, while the Achaeans, as they had been ordered to do, kept quietly waiting at their post. Therefore Eucleidas, the brother of Cleomenes, who noticed the gap thus made in the enemies' line, quickly sent round the most agile of his light-armed troops, with orders to attack the Illyrians in the rear and rout them, now that they had lost touch with the cavalry.

These orders were carried out, and the light-armed troops were driving the Illyrians before them in confusion, when Philopoemen perceived that it would be no great task to attack the light-armed troops, and that the occasion prompted this step. At first he pointed this out to the king's officers. Then, when they were not to be persuaded by him, but looked down upon him as a madman (since his reputation was not yet great enough to justify his being entrusted with so important a manoeuvre), he took matters into his own hands, formed his fellow-citizens into a wedge, and charged upon the enemy. At first the light-armed troops were thrown into confusion, then put to rout with great slaughter.

And now Philopoemen, wishing to encourage still further the king's troops and bring them swiftly upon the enemy thus thrown into disorder, quitted his horse, and with grievous difficulty forced his way along on foot, in his horseman's breastplate and heavy equipment, towards ground that was irregular and full of water-courses and ravines. Here he had both his thighs pierced through by a thronged javelin. The wound was not fatal, though severe, and the head of the weapon came out on the other side. At first, then, he was held fast as by a fetter, and was

altogether helpless; for the fastening of the thong made it difficult to draw the weapon back through the wound.

But since those about him hesitated to attempt this, and since, now that the battle was at its hottest, the ardour of his ambition made him impatient to join in the struggle, by moving his legs backward and forward he broke the shaft of the weapon in two in the middle, and then ordered each fragment to be drawn out separately. Thus set free, he drew his sword and made his way through the front ranks against the enemy, thereby greatly animating the combatants and inspiring them with a desire to emulate his valour. After his victory, therefore, Antigonus put the Macedonians to the question, and asked them why, without his orders, they had brought the cavalry into action. They defended themselves by saying that they had been forced against their will to attack the enemy, because a young man of Megalopolis had first led a charge against them. At this, Antigonus gave a laugh and said: "Well, then, that young man behaved like a great commander."¹³⁷

In addition to this we should realise that when on the march, horse riding had to be relieved with walking. Riding a horse is quite exhausting; long marches must have been physically challenging to cavalrymen and horses alike. We know that Alexander the Great had at his disposal a marching horse and a fighting horse to spare the latter. In his *Cavalry Commander* Xenophon writes: 'During a march the cavalry commander must always think ahead, in order that he may rest the horses' backs and relieve the men by walking, giving moderate spells of alternate riding and marching.'¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Plutarchus, *Philopoimen* 6.1 – 7.

¹³⁸ CC 4.1.

As so often with cavalry tactics, there is not much difference between ancient and modern warfare. Modern cavalry was also trained to fight on horseback as well as on foot. Colonel Maude explains why:

“It follows therefore that cavalry reconnaissance duties will be strictly local and tactical, (...) and that on the whole that nation will be best served in war which has provided in peace a nucleus of mounted infantry capable of rapid expansion to fill the gap which history shows always to have existed between the infantry and the cavalry. Such troops need not be organized in large bodies, for their mission is to act by "slimness," not by violence. They must be the old "verlorene ilaube" (*anglice*, "forlorn hope") of former days, men whose individual bravery and decision is of the highest order. But they can never become a "decision-compelling arm," though by their devotion they may well hope to obtain the grand opportunity for their cavalry, and share with them in harvesting the fruits of victory.

The great cavalry encounters of forty to sixty squadrons on either side, which it has been shown must arise from the necessity of screening or preventing the formation of the all-important artillery lines, will take their form mainly from the topographical conditions of the district, and since on a front of 60 to 100 m. these may vary indefinitely, cavalry must be trained, as indeed it always has been, to fight either on foot or on horseback as occasion requires. In either case, thoroughness of preparation in horsemanship (which, be it observed, includes horsemastership) is the first essential”.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Col. Frederic Natusch Maude C.B., *Cavalry*, Encyclopedia Britannica 11th ed. 1910, vol. 5: 569.

Likewise, Alois Podhajsky, a cavalry officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army during World War I and former director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna (1939 – 1965) , writes that he was disappointed (as a cavalry officer during the war against Russia in 1914 - 1917) for not fighting on horseback but rather on foot:

‘When I was sent to the Russian front I had to face the facts of life. Horses were used for short patrols and messenger rides only, and most of the cavalry had to fight on foot.’¹⁴⁰

Archaic and classical cavalry had a twofold use, depending on battlefield circumstances and numbers of horsemen available. The ability to fight on foot as well as on horseback was a distinctive feature of horsemanship. Being able to fight both on foot and on horseback increased the chance of victory and survival. Terrain is a major factor in the deployment of cavalry. As Dionysius explains:

‘They fought on horseback where there was level ground favourable for cavalry manoeuvres and on foot where it was rough and inconvenient for horses.’¹⁴¹

According to Plutarch, this is what Philopoemen did when he was defeated in battle:

‘Then Philopoemen, fearing that he would be enveloped, and trying to spare his horsemen, withdrew over difficult ground (...) Even then no

¹⁴⁰ Podhajsky (1968, 3rd print 1997) 24.

¹⁴¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Romaike Archaiologia* 2.13.3 – 4 and 2.64.3.

one ventured to come to close quarters with him, but he was pelted with missiles from a distance and forced upon rocky and precipitous places, so that he had difficulty in managing his horse and kept tearing him with the spur. His age, owing to his generous exercise, was not burdensome, and in no way impeded his escape; but at that time his body was enfeebled by sickness and worn out with a long journey, so that he was heavy and stiff, and at length his horse stumbled and threw him to the ground. His fall was a heavy one and his head was hurt, and he lay for a long time speechless, so that his enemies thought him dead and tried to turn his body over and strip it of its armour'.¹⁴²

The terrain often compelled Athenian and Spartan riders to dismount; they had to employ their cavalry in a different and more flexible manner than some of the peoples of the Near East had done. This diminished the need and motivation for thorough cavalry training. As a result they were no match for cavalries such as the Thessalian or Persian cavalries. The Greeks understood their shortcomings in cavalry warfare on level grounds and plains. Agesilaus, for example, knew that he needed better cavalry to meet the Persians on the Asian plains.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Plutarchus, *Philopoimen* 18.

¹⁴³ Ag 3.4.15.

3.3. 5th century

Before 490 BC, Greek wars had mainly been restricted to border warfare and petty regional skirmishes; great land wars thus far had not been numerous. As Thucydides observes:

‘Wars by land there were none, none at least by which power was acquired; we have the usual border contests, but of distant expeditions with conquest for object we hear nothing among the Hellenes. There was no union of subject cities round a great state, no spontaneous combination of equals for confederate expeditions; what fighting there was consisted merely of local warfare between rival neighbours.’¹⁴⁴

Ober contends that raiding also was an important tactic in Greek warfare.¹⁴⁵ Raiding and border patrol were cavalry duties.

Naucrary cavalry

Most Greek *poleis* consequently did not need to employ a large cavalry regiment for border warfare; they usually employed small cavalry units, in Attica known as mobilized units called *naucraries*. These units functioned as border patrols, forage parties, scouts and messengers. They could also spy, chase or harass the enemy, or cut off his water or food supplies. These units usually did not engage in battle.¹⁴⁶ According to Xenophon a small cavalry is

¹⁴⁴ Thuc 1.15.2.

¹⁴⁵ J. Ober (1985) 35.

¹⁴⁶ Herodotus describes the regular tasks of the Greek horsemen. In Her 9.54 the Athenians send a messenger on horseback to the Spartans to ask Pausanias for instructions. The Athenians send mounted messengers to the Spartans in Her 9.55 and 9.56; in Her 9.60 the Spartans send a messenger to the Athenians.

more suitable to tasks such as raiding, spying or the conveying of messages. Being small in numbers, it can hardly function as an independent military force on the battlefield.¹⁴⁷ This type of cavalry I would like to call a ‘naucrarian cavalry’.

Battle cavalry

When Greek *poleis* were planning to invade the territories of neighbouring cities, larger regiments of cavalry were hired, which could be committed to battle. Thessaly for example was known to be the most powerful Greek cavalry state.¹⁴⁸ This sort of cavalry was highly trained and the riders serving in it were accustomed to fighting cavalry battles, mostly against other cavalry and over large distances. They were light-armed and resorted to the use of long distance missiles thrown by peltasts and archers. This sort of cavalry is known as battle cavalry.

Alliances between cities existed mostly for support in times of war. *Poleis* that were supported merely by Naucrarian cavalry had to form alliances with *poleis* that owned large regiments of battle cavalry, most of which were states with large pastures on which they could breed their herds.¹⁴⁹ Another option was to annexe or colonise such a state or breeding area. Athens colonised Chalkis, part of Euboia, and planted tenant farmers on the lands of the Chalcidians, also known as ‘Horse-breeders’. Athens, of course, did not have an abundant area of land suitable for horse breeding.¹⁵⁰ By colonising Euboia, particularly Chalkis,

¹⁴⁷ CC 7.2 – 4 and 7.6 – 10.

¹⁴⁸ Simon, *De Re Equestri* 1.

¹⁴⁹ Her 5.74: Sparta, Chalkis and Thebes are allies against Athens.

¹⁵⁰ Her 9.13: Attica is not suitable for cavalry warfare, the land around Thebes is.

Athens could obtain a regular supply of young cavalry horses. Herodotus writes:

When this force then had been ingloriously scattered, the Athenians first marched against the Chalcidians to punish them. The Boeotians came to the Euripus to help the Chalcidians and as soon as the Athenians saw these allies, they resolved to attack the Boeotians before the Chalcidians. When they met the Boeotians in battle, they won a great victory, slaying very many and taking seven hundred of them prisoner. On that same day the Athenians crossed to Euboea where they met the Chalcidians too in battle, and after overcoming them as well, they left four thousand tenant farmers on the lands of the horse-breeders. Horse-breeders is the name we see given to the men of substance among the Chalcidians. They fettered as many of these as they took alive and kept them imprisoned with the captive Boeotians. In time, however, they set them free, each for an assessed ransom of two minae.¹⁵¹

Simon names Thessaly as the most powerful cavalry state in Greece. Thessaly has large pastures and is relatively flat. Thessalians were especially renowned as peltasts who use javelins in combat. The Thessalians could easily field 1,000 horsemen, as in the battle at Phaleron, 514 BC, where Thessalian cavalry fought the Spartans. The Athenians had hired this Thessalian cavalry. On the plain of Phaleron the Thessalian king Cineas led one thousand Thessalian horsemen against the Spartans who were trying to attack Athens. Herodotus writes:

‘They [the Spartans] sent these men by sea on shipboard. Anchimolius put in at Phalerum and disembarked his army there. The sons of Pisistratus, however, had received word of the plan already, and sent to

¹⁵¹ Her 5.77.1 – 3 and 6.100.

ask help from the Thessalians with whom they had an alliance. The Thessalians, at their entreaty, joined together and sent their own king, Cineas of Conium, with a thousand horsemen. When the Pisistratidae got these allies, they devised the following plan.

First they laid waste the plain of Phalerum so that all that land could be ridden over and then launched their cavalry against the enemy's army. Then the horsemen charged and slew Anchimolius and many more of the Lacedaemonians, and drove those that survived to their ships. Accordingly, the first Lacedaemonian army drew off, and Anchimolius' tomb is at Alopecae in Attica, near to the Heracleum in Cynosarges.¹⁵²

The disembarking Spartans were surprised by the amount of cavalry. Some time later on the Spartans did not travel by sea, but attacked over land from the Northwest. The outcome of this battle was rather different and the Thessalian horsemen took flight to Thessaly. In his *Histories*, Herodotus writes:

‘After this the Lacedaemonians sent out a greater army to attack Athens, appointing as its general their king Cleomenes son of Anaxandrides. This army they sent not by sea but by land. When they broke into Attica, the Thessalian horsemen were the first to meet them. They were routed after only a short time, and more than forty men were slain. Those who were left alive made off for Thessaly by the nearest way they could.’¹⁵³

Their cavalry was known for its discipline and large numbers. Pausanias writes that the Phocians were greatly terrified by the army of the Thessalians,

¹⁵² Her 5.63.3 – 4.

¹⁵³ Her 5.64.1 – 2.

especially by the number of their cavalry and the discipline of both mounts and riders.¹⁵⁴ These troops may have been trained to the highest degree.¹⁵⁵

According to Strabo, Thessalian horsemanship was equal to that of the Medes.¹⁵⁶ This is an interesting remark, because the Medes were a Scythian people and, according to Xenophon, the Medes were the originators of Persian horsemanship.¹⁵⁷ The Mede style of horsemanship relied much on large numbers and distances.¹⁵⁸ It was suitable for fighting battles on horseback, but not for fighting against closed infantry lines.¹⁵⁹ In his *Hellenica*, Xenophon states that the Thessalian army would usually form a hollow square of infantry with cavalry placed in front and at the rear. But they would wheel their horses and flee when they encountered hoplites.¹⁶⁰

In classical times, Sparta had six *morai* of cavalry.¹⁶¹ We do not know exactly how many horsemen a *mora* contained or whether a *mora* was part of an infantry squadron. A number for the entire cavalry mentioned 120, so a *mora* would have consisted of 20 horsemen.¹⁶² Lazenby also suggested a number of 300 or 100 horsemen.¹⁶³ These horsemen could have formed the royal guard, and would have been comparable to a Naucrarian cavalry. According to Herodotus, five of the oldest horsemen left service each year.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁴ Pausanias 10.1.4.

¹⁵⁵ Hell 6.4.28.

¹⁵⁶ Strabo 11.14.12 and 2.14.12; Diodorus Siculus 2.43.4-7; Pausanias 10.1.5; Her 4.128 and 9.57: Persian cavalry did not want to fight against closed infantry lines.

¹⁵⁷ Strabo 2.13.9: 'the zeal for archery and horsemanship came to the Persians from the Medes.'

¹⁵⁸ Her 8.28.

¹⁵⁹ Her 9.18.

¹⁶⁰ Hell 4.3.5-9

¹⁶¹ Hell 5.4.39; P. Connolly, *Greece and Rome at War* (Greenhill Books 2006) 40.

¹⁶² J. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army* (Aris and Philips Ltd 1985) 12.

¹⁶³ Lazenby (1985) 53. He refers to Herodotus 1.67.5/8.124.3 and 6.56.1.

¹⁶⁴ Her 1.67.5.

Thebes requested its allies to supply a maximum of four squadrons of cavalrymen per polis, each consisting of 50 horsemen.¹⁶⁵ These squadrons were used for border patrol.¹⁶⁶

After the Battle at Marathon, Athens and Sparta had requested Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, to supply infantry and cavalry. He also had archers and dragoons at his disposal. Syracuse and Sicily had cavalry that was capable of meeting the Persians in combat. Gelon had also clashed regularly with Carthage and had established a number of trading posts in Spain. However, he refused. Sicily had been partially Greek from 750 BC onwards and it maintained Iberian trading contacts.¹⁶⁷

Athens kept up its policy of raising about 96 horsemen from its *Naucraries*.¹⁶⁸ This lasted until about 483 BC, seven years after the Battle at Marathon. Around 483 BC this number was increased to 300.¹⁶⁹ According to Bugh and others, the Athenian cavalry consisted of 300 men between 483 and 450 BC when Pericles increased its number to 1,000.¹⁷⁰ Therefore the Persian Wars are often interpreted as a turning point in Athenian cavalry history. The so-called rise of the Athenian cavalry is said to have happened after this period.¹⁷¹

Around 500 BC, Athens was still a naucrarian state.¹⁷² Attica was unsuitable for horse combat because in the event of defeat one had to retreat through narrow

¹⁶⁵ R. Etienne and P. Roesch, *Convention Militaire entre les Cavaliers d'Orchomène et ceux de Chéronée*, Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, Vol 102, (1978) Episode 1, 359 – 374.

¹⁶⁶ Etienne and Roesch (1978) 359 – 374.

¹⁶⁷ Her 7.158.

¹⁶⁸ Pollux, *Onomastikon* 8.108. The 48 Athenian naucraries had each to deliver 2 horsemen (and a ship), which adds up to 96 horsemen.

¹⁶⁹ Bugh (1988) 15.

¹⁷⁰ Bugh (1988) 80.

¹⁷¹ Van Wees (2004) 180.

¹⁷² Herodotus describes the regular tasks of the Greek riders during the Persian Wars: in 9.54 he writes that the Athenians sent out a messenger on horseback to the Spartans to ask Pausanias for

passes which could easily be defended by a small number of men.¹⁷³ Iphicrates of Athens had formed his riders in a line over a large area because of their numbers but when they were forced to retreat they were impeded due to the difficult terrain and this cost him 20 riders.¹⁷⁴ Compare Xenophon's comment in the *Cavalry Commander*:

‘If you charge a superior force, you must remember never to leave behind you ground difficult for horses.’¹⁷⁵

Traditionally, the Athenian class of *Hippeis* consisted of men whose estates could produce 300 *medimnoi* or who could keep horses. There was therefore an age-old connection between the elite and the keeping of horses. *Hippeis* were regarded as nobility. Some of the nobility also kept racehorses. Being able to support a four-horse chariot was the ultimate symbol of wealth. Miltiades was an important Athenian and a member of a family which could afford a four-horse chariot.¹⁷⁶

Persian Wars

In 499 BC, the Persian empire was expanding towards the Greek mainland. The Ionian *poleis* in Asia Minor had revolted against the Persian King Darius and sought assistance from Athens and Sparta. King Darius wanted to punish Athens and Sparta for aiding the Ionian states. The Greek *poleis* were suddenly

instructions. This happens again in 9.55 and 9.56. The Spartans sent out a mounted messenger in 9.60.

¹⁷³ Her 9.13 – 15.

¹⁷⁴ Hell 6.5.52.

¹⁷⁵ CC 8.9.

¹⁷⁶ Her 6.35.

aroused by a threatening invasion of their homeland. These *poleis* had only small cavalry squadrons of the Naucrarian kind available to them. These were not accustomed to fighting cavalry battles. The Persian army had a large battle cavalry regiment which partly consisted of mounted archers. These were light-armed.

Their first encounter was at the Battle at Marathon. After the Persian army had conquered Eretria, they deployed their army including the cavalry on the Marathon plain. They believed their cavalry would have the largest space to manoeuvre on this plain. Herodotus wrote:

‘After subduing Eretria, the Persians waited a few days and then sailed away to the land of Attica, pressing ahead in expectation of doing to the Athenians exactly what they had done to the Eretrians. Marathon was the place in Attica most suitable for riding horses and closest to Eretria, so Hippias son of Pisistratus led them there.’¹⁷⁷

As said before, Attica itself was not suitable for cavalry battles, because in the event of defeat there was no escape route since it was enclosed by small mountain passes where only a few men would be needed to finish off the cavalry.¹⁷⁸ According to Herodotus, the Persians were rather surprised to find that the Greeks did not field cavalry together with their infantry. Their surprise however, as it turned out, would soon turn to despair.

The Persians apparently were not aware of the ground conditions at Marathon. Pausanias writes:

¹⁷⁷ Her 6.102.

¹⁷⁸ Her 9.13 – 15.

‘There is at Marathon a lake which for the most part is marshy. Into this ignorance of the roads made the foreigners fall in their flight, and it is said that this accident was the cause of their great losses.’¹⁷⁹

Elsewhere, this author writes:

‘At the end of the painting are those who fought at Marathon; the Boeotians of Plataea and the Attic contingent are coming to blows with the foreigners. In this place neither side has the better, but the center of the fighting shows the foreigners in flight and pushing one another into the morass, while at the end of the painting are the Phoenician ships, and the Greeks killing the foreigners who are scrambling into them.’¹⁸⁰

After the Persians had been defeated at Marathon and had returned home, Xerxes mobilised an enormous cavalry.¹⁸¹ Athens and Sparta knew they could not cope with the Persian cavalry themselves and they appealed to Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, for help. He refused to help them, according to Herodotus, either because he felt that Sparta and Athens had not helped him in a previous war or because he was threatened by the Carthaginians who wanted to take over Sicily, and he needed to concentrate his armed forces.¹⁸²

The Thebans and their Boeotian allies were aiding the Persians with their cavalry.¹⁸³ At Plataeae, for example, they protected fleeing hoplites from their enemies and they fought off any pursuers. The Theban horsemen defeated

¹⁷⁹ Pausanias 1.32.7.

¹⁸⁰ Pausanias 1.15.3.

¹⁸¹ Her 7.84-88. A total of 80,000 horsemen containing amongst others Persians, Medians, Sagartians, Indians and Arabians who did not ride horses, but camels.

¹⁸² Her 7.158.

¹⁸³ Her 9.40 and 9.68.

Megaraeans and Phleasians by killing 600 men at the first encounter.¹⁸⁴ The Thessalians also aided the Persian army.

The Persian army was a difficult opponent because of its mounted archers. According to Herodotus, it was extremely difficult to get at these riders who were light-armed, and were rapidly moving bowmen.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, the Persians made good use of their cavalry, cutting off Greek infantry divisions from water supplies and preventing them from foraging.¹⁸⁶ They could fire arrows from long distances and from horseback. They were a fast-moving target, were difficult to hit, and they could execute swift charges on infantry lines.¹⁸⁷ Sparta and Athens and their allies apparently did not have cavalry capable of counteracting this or of fighting cavalry battles for that matter. They did have horsemen, but these were used as messengers and raiders, and were not trained in cavalry combat.¹⁸⁸

In close encounters, however, the Persian cavalry could be defeated. At Plataeae, the Persians and Spartans clashed. The Persian cavalry regiments attacked one by one, but the Spartan hoplites did not give way. The Persian cavalry commander Masistios was thrown from his horse and Persian cavalrymen tried to protect their leader, but were not successful in doing so.¹⁸⁹ In this battle the Persians were no longer able to use their bows, but had to fight hand to hand. Now they in their turn showed themselves to be inexperienced,

¹⁸⁴ Her 9.69.

¹⁸⁵ Her 9.49.

¹⁸⁶ For example in Her 9.49, 9.50 and 9.51.

¹⁸⁷ Her 9.40;9.49;9.50;9.52;9.57: Xenophon, *Anabasis* 3.3.10: even while fleeing the Persian cavalry was still able to slay enemies because they could fire missiles from horseback.

¹⁸⁸ Her 9.54 and 9.60.

¹⁸⁹ Her 9.21 – 25.

lacking tactical insight, and were extremely vulnerable against hoplite lines because they were fighting without armour.¹⁹⁰

Another example of how the Persian cavalry might not be capable of facing the hoplite lines is the encounter of Phocian hoplites against the Persian cavalry. This happened when Mardonius, the Persian general, was in Boiotia to lead the Thebans and other Boeotians against Athens in the summer of 479 BC, some months before the Battle at Plataea. All Boeotians came willingly to his aid, but the Phocians did so reluctantly out of necessity. Mardonius bade them to take their station on the plain by themselves. When they did so, the Persian cavalry showed up, encircled them and the Phocians thought the Persians would shoot them with their javelins.

But when the horsemen had encircled the Phocians, they rode at them as if to slay them, and drew their bows to shoot; it is likely too that some did in fact shoot. The Phocians opposed them in every possible way, drawing in together and closing their ranks to the best of their power. At this the horsemen wheeled about and rode back and away.¹⁹¹

Herodotus believes this to mean that the Persians did not actually intend to attack the Phocians and were merely testing them, but I believe that the Persian cavalry was unwilling to attack hoplites. Herodotus thought likewise:

Now I cannot with exactness say whether they came at the Thessalians' desire to slay the Phocians, but when they saw the men preparing to defend themselves, they feared lest they themselves should suffer some

¹⁹⁰ Her 9.62 and 63.

¹⁹¹ Her 9.17.

hurt, and so rode away (for such was Mardonius' command),—or if Mardonius wanted to test the Phocians' mettle.¹⁹²

The Persians preferred to fight in small groups or individually.¹⁹³ The Greek army used battle formations, while the Persians sought to fight from long distances with arrows and javelins.¹⁹⁴ The Athenians and Spartans fought mainly in close combat, with their hoplites battling against one another. The Athenian horsemen and their allies simply may not have had the training or experience to fight the Persian cavalry in cavalry battle formation but, as Gaebel rightly remarks: ‘The Persians never did overcome the fundamental disparity between their infantry and that of the Greeks.’¹⁹⁵

During the Persian Wars, the Athenian cavalry was a naucrarian cavalry and therefore did not perform battle tasks. Boeotian and Thessalian cavalry were battle cavalries and chose to aid the Persian side. This proved to be a helpful addition to the Persian cavalry which was in fact a long-distance cavalry accustomed to fighting with mounted archers and not used to fighting in close combat.

After the Persian Wars, the number of Athenian cavalrymen was increased. But a larger cavalry regiment is not always a tactical improvement, as Xenophon knew all too well:

“Then again it is obvious that in point of endurance and speed the advantage is much more likely to rest with a small than with a large force. I do not mean that mere paucity of numbers will increase the men's powers of endurance and

¹⁹² Her 9.18.2.

¹⁹³ Lazenby (1985) 55 and Her 9.62.3.

¹⁹⁴ Lazenby (1985) 94 and Her 7.225.3.

¹⁹⁵ Gaebel (2002) 73.

add to their speed; but it is easier to find few men than many who will take proper care of their horses and will practise the art of horsemanship intelligently on their own account.”¹⁹⁶

A large cavalry is hard to manage. Xenophon continues:

“But should he guard whatever lies outside the walls with a force that will be just sufficient to keep an eye on the enemy and to remove into safety from as great a distance as possible property that needs saving,—and a large force is not necessary for this: a small force can keep a look-out as well as a large one, and when it comes to guarding and removing the property of friends, men who have no confidence in themselves or their horses will meet the case, because Fear, it seems, is a [7] formidable member of a guard—well, it may perhaps be a sound plan to draw on these men for his guards. But if he imagines that the number remaining over and above the guard constitutes an army, he will find it too small; for it will be utterly inadequate to risk a conflict in the open. Let him use these men as raiders, and he will probably have a force quite sufficient for this purpose. [8] His business, it seems to me, is to watch for any blunder on the enemy's part without showing himself, keeping men constantly on the alert and ready to strike. [9] It happens that, the greater is the number of soldiers, the more they are apt to blunder. Either they scatter deliberately in search of provisions, or they are so careless of order on the march that some get too far ahead, while others lag too far behind.”¹⁹⁷

The only way for a large cavalry regiment to have success is for its horsemanship to be improved, as may be learned also from modern history:

¹⁹⁶ CC 8.16.

¹⁹⁷ CC 5.6 – 9.

‘For the generation preceding the outbreak of the French Revolution, Frederick the Great's army, and especially his cavalry, had become the model for all Europe, but the mainspring of the excellence of his squadrons revolution was everywhere overlooked. Seydlitz had manoeuvred great masses of horsemen, therefore every one else must have great masses also; but no nation grasped the secret, the unconditional obedience of the horse to its rider, on which his success had depended.’¹⁹⁸

Therefore increasing the cavalry numbers is not the only way to improve your cavalry. The level of horsemanship should increase accordingly.

Cavalry of the Athenian Empire

Athens was the leading city in its naval Empire and needed more cavalrymen to defend it. They still had naucrarian cavalry, which would be sent out in small units together with infantry. There are but few sources concerning cavalry deployment during the 60 years between the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian Wars. According to Thucydides, the Greek *poleis* were well-trained in the school of war because during these 60 years, the balance between war and peace was a fragile one:

“So that the whole period from the Median war to this, with some peaceful intervals, was spent by each power in war, either with its rival, or with its own revolted allies, and consequently afforded them

¹⁹⁸ Col. Frederic Natusch Maude C.B., *Cavalry*, Encyclopedia Britannica 11th ed. 1910, vol. 5: 653-672.

constant practice in military matters, and that experience which is learnt in the school of danger.’¹⁹⁹

Thus Classical Greek cavalry actions still encompassed raids, attack and flight, and reconnaissance. Only the Thessalian, Macedonian or Boeotian cavalry were akin to battle cavalries. But this was about to change. The Athenians and Spartans were aided by cavalry regiments in their battles but were beginning to learn how to fight battles on horseback as well. In the first part of the Peloponnesian war, the years 431 – 415 BC, some cavalry skirmishes occurred. I will give a short overview below.

The Athenians sent in a fleet carrying infantry and horses to the north to subdue rebellious Potidaia in a first attack in 433 BC. The Potidaeans received help from the Macedonian king Perdiccas and from the Corinthians, who both sent aid, including some cavalry. Macedonia sent 600 riders. This allied cavalry, however, were of little use to the Potidaeans in battle actions.²⁰⁰ During their first invasion of Attica in 431 BC, the Spartans defeated the Athenian cavalry at the *Rheitoi*.²⁰¹ Afterwards, Pericles regularly dispatched cavalry to prevent patrolling and plundering enemies from coming too close to the Athenian city walls.

On another occasion in 431, a cavalry battle raged at the Greek town of Phrygia between the Athenian and Thessalian cavalry and their Boeotian mounted opponents. The Boeotians were assisted by their hoplites and subsequently defeated the Athenians and Thessalians:

¹⁹⁹ Thuc 1.18.3.

²⁰⁰ Thuc 1.56 – 65: According to 1.63 the cavalry eventually does not fight.

²⁰¹ Thuc 2.19.

There was a trifling affair at Phrygia between a squadron of the Athenian horse with the Thessalians and the Boeotian cavalry; in which the former had rather the best of it, until the heavy infantry advanced to the support of the Boeotians, when the Thessalians and Athenians were routed and lost a few men, whose bodies, however, were recovered the same day without a truce.²⁰²

In 430 BC, the Athenians began to use horse transport ships for the first time. In 429 the Athenians dispatched 200 cavalrymen and some 2,000 hoplites against Chalcis. The Chalcidian horsemen attacked with spears wherever they could, put to flight the Athenian cavalrymen and pursued them.²⁰³

Shortly thereafter, in the summer of 428, Athenian horsemen attacked Lacedaemonian raiders who were spoiling Attica during the third Lacedaemonian invasion of Attica.²⁰⁴

In 425, after taking part in a small raid against Sicily, the Athenian fleet sailed to Corinth. The Athenian horsetransport ships carried 200 cavalrymen with their horses. They beached in the vicinity of the small town of Solygia. Here the Athenians had the benefit of cavalry as their opponents had none. They defeated the Corinthians here and went on to Crommyon, here they first devastated the land and finally disconnected the Peloponnesian peninsula from the Greek mainland by building a wall at Methana, between Epidaurus and Troezen.²⁰⁵

After this strategical feat, the Athenians went on to occupy the island of Cythera in the summer of 424. Cythera lies opposite to the southeast tip of the Peloponnese giving it high strategical importance. The Spartans feared more

²⁰² Thuc 2.22.2.

²⁰³ Thuc 2.79.

²⁰⁴ Thuc 3.1.

²⁰⁵ Thuc 4.42-44.

Athenian landraids after this move and decided to put small contingents of hoplites at various towns across the Peloponnese. They even fielded an extraordinary number of 400 cavalry and archers.²⁰⁶

In 424 BC, the Boeotian cavalry numbered 600 horsemen and these attacked the Athenian light-armed troops.²⁰⁷ Hippocrates left 300 horsemen at Delium to defend the city but also to attack the Boeotian cavalry if the occasion arose. The Boeotians had 1,000 horsemen, so they were the dominant force. The Athenians had cavalry on both flanks and had to charge uphill. The Thebans were on the hill and charged downhill. On the left flank, the Athenians defeated the Boeotians, who were in fact Thespians but on the right, the Theban cavalry was winning the battle.

The battle was won by Pagondas, the Theban general, when he sent two squadrons of cavalry around the hill. When these appeared, the Athenian hoplites panicked and fled. The Theban cavalry followed in pursuit and killed them.²⁰⁸ Boiotia was an ally of the Spartans at that time and had itself clearly specialized in cavalry. In 424 also a battle between Boeotia with their Spartan allies and Athens ensued at Megara, in which 600 cavalrymen of Boeotia fought against the Athenian cavalry. The latter won.²⁰⁹

During these first years of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenian cavalry seems to have operated as a naucrary cavalry, depending on the Athenian fleet for their transport and speed, supporting their hoplites on the battlefield and seems to have been victorious only if their enemies did not have cavalry. The Boeotian

²⁰⁶ Thuc 4.55.

²⁰⁷ Thuc 4.72; see also Thuc 4.76-77; 4.89-101.1-2.

²⁰⁸ Thuc 4.93 – 94. In Thuc 4.96.5 Boiotian squadrons suddenly appeared and won the battle.

²⁰⁹ Bugh (1988) 87. In 408 however the Athenians routed the enemy here according to Diodorus Siculus 13.65.1-2.

cavalry was stronger and more capable of fighting battles. The Thebans won their battles against Athenian cavalry with ease.

The Sicilian Expedition

Between 415 – 413 BC, the Athenians embarked on their infamous Expedition to Syracuse. Sicily was part of Magna Graecia, but it had Iberian trade posts, for example. Long before the Persian Wars, the Syracusans had been involved in a longstanding conflict with the neighbouring Carthaginians.²¹⁰ Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, was heavily involved in a war with Hamilcar of Carthage, who was trying to invade Sicily with an army of Carthaginians, Lybians, Iberians and some island tribes.²¹¹ Syracuse had many trading posts and settlers on the Iberian peninsula.²¹² The Athenians even tried to ally themselves with the Carthaginians and the Etruscans before they undertook this expedition.²¹³ The Syracusan army was aided by the Spartans and the Corinthians (given that Syracusan Greeks were of Dorian and Corinthian origin) and their allies of the Boeotian league, which sent 300 hoplites to Sicily in 413 BC.²¹⁴

Athens must have had a thorough knowledge of the military situation in Sicily. After the Battle at Marathon, Athens and Sparta had sent emissaries to Gelon,

²¹⁰ Her 7.158 (the Carthaginians are called ‘Carchedonians’ here) and Hell 1.1.37.

²¹¹ Her 7.165.

²¹² Her 1.163: Phocians discovered traderoutes to the Iberian peninsula before the fifth century. Strabo 3.2.14: de Phoenicians occupied the best of Iberia and Lybia before the age of Homer and continued to be the masters of those regions until the Romans broke up their empire. According to Strabo 3.4.3 emigrants from Messene colonised Iberia, a part of Cantabria became colonised by Laconinas. Strabo mentions Polybius and Asclepiades as his primary sources. Cantabria which is nowadays called Terraco is on the border between Iberia and Celtica (3.4.8).

²¹³ Hell 6.88.

²¹⁴ Thuc 7.19.3.

requesting him to provide them with infantry and cavalry.²¹⁵ They knew, therefore, that Syracuse and its Sicilian and Celtiberian allies had cavalry which was capable of fighting the Persians.

Alcibiades believed that the Sicilian infantry would not be able to fight against the Athenian hoplites, but saw the Sicilian cavalry as a great danger.²¹⁶ Therefore it is rather surprising that the Athenians did send cavalrymen but not horses along with these men.²¹⁷ They would appear to have underestimated the necessity of training their cavalry or for that matter the level of horsemanship that was required. The horses had to be bought in Sicily, therefore they made themselves dependent on the goodwill of Sicilian horse traders and their willingness to sell good-quality horses. Eventually, after a number of defeats, Athens agreed to send horses with their cavalry.²¹⁸

The Sicilian cavalry was a difficult enemy for the Athenians, since it harassed the Athenian cavalry during foraging and scouting.²¹⁹ Worse still, the Athenians had no military response to the Sicilian cavalry when it attacked both their cavalry and their heavy infantry.²²⁰ The Sicilians employed a different method of cavalry warfare: they attacked heavy infantry lines and threw javelins at the hoplites.

²¹⁵ Her 7.158.

²¹⁶ Thuc 6.90.

²¹⁷ Thuc 6.41.

²¹⁸ Thuc 6.44 Athene sends 1 horsetransportship with 30 cavalrymen and horses.

²¹⁹ Thuc 6.101; 7.1; 7.4 the Syracusan horsemen were masters the country. They had stationed one third of their cavalry at a hamlet at the Olympieum. The Athenians had fortified the hamlet of Plemmyrium; 7.5 benefit of Syracusan cavalry and javelin-men deprived because of arranging the line of battle too much between the walls; 7.6 Syracusan cavalry attacks the left wing of the Athenians. They destroyed the Athenian infantry which resulted in a defeat; 7.78 the Sicilian cavalry is continually attacking the Athenian army with their javelins. They try to prohibit the march of the Athenian army by riding up and down the lines of infantry and throwing their javelins.

²²⁰ Thuc 6.68 – 6.69.

As he made this address, Nicias went along the ranks, and brought back to their place any of the troops that he saw straggling out of the line; while Demosthenes did as much for his part of the army, addressing them in words very similar. [2] The army marched in a hollow square, the division under Nicias leading, and that of Demosthenes following, the heavy infantry being outside and the baggage-carriers and the bulk of the army in the middle. [3] When they arrived at the ford of the river Anapus they there found drawn up a body of the Syracusans and allies, and routing these, made good their passage and pushed on, harassed by the charges of the Syracusan horse and by the missiles of their light troops. [4] On that day they advanced about four miles and a half, halting for the night upon a certain hill. On the next they started early and got on about two miles further, and descended into a place in the plain and there encamped, in order to procure some eatables from the houses, as the place was inhabited, and to carry on with them water from thence, as for many furlongs in front, in the direction in which they were going, it was not plentiful. [5] The Syracusans meanwhile went on and fortified the pass in front, where there was a steep hill with a rocky ravine on each side of it, called the Acraean cliff. [6] The next day the Athenians advancing found themselves impeded by the missiles and charges of the horse and darters, both very numerous, of the Syracusans and allies; and after fighting for a long while, at length retired to the same camp, where they had no longer provisions as before, it being impossible to leave their position by reason of the cavalry.²²¹

This appears similar to actions by the Numidian cavalry in the Second Punic War. The Numidians were known for their speed and their method of harassing

²²¹ Thuc 7.78.

their enemies by attack and flight. The Numidians were known for their speed in this mode of combat in which they again and again try to break into the closed enemy battle lines.²²² To quote Appian: ‘The Numidians practice themselves in throwing the javelin and attack and flight.’²²³ Lazenby calls this the peculiar Numidian way of fighting.²²⁴ It is likely that the Sicilian cavalry had more or less adopted this Numidian mode of combat as they had been enemies of the Carthaginians for so long. Later, in the Peloponnesian War, they adopt the same tactics:

But the horsemen sent by Dionysius, few though they were, scattering themselves here and there, would ride along the enemy's line, charge upon them and throw javelins at them, and when the enemy began to move forth against them, would retreat, and then turn round and throw their javelins again. And while pursuing these tactics they would dismount from their horses and rest. But if anyone charged upon them while they were dismounted, they would leap easily upon their horses and retreat. On the other hand, if any pursued them far from the Theban army, they would press upon these men when they were retiring, and by throwing javelins work havoc with them, and thus they compelled the entire army, according to their own will, either to advance or to fall back.²²⁵

²²² C. Sallustius Crispus, *De Bello Iugurthino* 52: ‘plerosque [Numidae] velocitas (...) tutata sunt.’ *Ibidem*, 59: ‘quibus illi freti non, uti equestri proelio solet, sequi, dein cedere, sed advorsis equis concurrere, implicare ad perturbare aciem’.

²²³ Appian, *Punica* 2.6.

²²⁴ J. Lazenby, *Hannibal's War, A Military History of the Second Punic War* (University of Oklahoma Press 1978) 84: ‘the peculiar Numidian way of fighting. Numidians were masters at this kind of fighting, wheeling in and dashing away before the enemy would close.’

²²⁵ Hell 7.1.21.

The Athenian cavalry was not capable of fighting the Sicilian cavalry.²²⁶ The Athenian cavalymen were still performing Naucrarian tasks, hindered by the Sicilian cavalry. And the Athenian infantry was pursued by the Sicilian cavalry and was unable to stand their ground against the attack and flight tactics.

To the Athenians, this was an unexpected type of cavalry warfare. The Athenians eventually found a solution to this problem. They attacked with their heavy infantry and their cavalry and were able to win a small victory against the Syracusan cavalry:

Not long afterwards three hundred cavalry came to them from Egesta, and about a hundred from the Sicels, Naxians, and others; and thus, with the two hundred and fifty from Athens, for whom they had got horses from the Egestaeans and Catanians, besides others that they bought, they now mustered six hundred and fifty cavalry in all. [2] After posting a garrison in Labdalum, they advanced to Syca, where they sate down and quickly built the Circle or centre of their wall of circumvallation. The Syracusans, appalled at the rapidity with which the work advanced, determined to go out against them and give battle and interrupt it; [3] and the two armies were already in battle array, when the Syracusan generals observed that their troops found such difficulty in getting into line, and were in such disorder, that they led them back into the town, except part of the cavalry.

²²⁶ It should be noted that Sicilian *hamippoi* also known as *hippodromoi* are referred to by Herodotus: "This is what they said, and Gelon, speaking very vehemently, said in response to this: "(..) I am ready to send to your aid two hundred triremes, twenty thousand men-at-arms, two thousand horsemen, two thousand archers, two thousand slingers, and two thousand light-armed men to run with horsemen. I also pledge to furnish provisions for the whole Greek army until we have made an end of the war. All this, however, I promise on one condition, that I shall be general and leader of the Greeks against the foreigner. On no other condition will I come myself or send others." (Her 7.158.4-5) It is remarkable that Gelon already had *hamippoi* troops at his disposal during the Persian Wars and that these apparently were not deployed during the Sicilian Expedition against Athenian cavalry. Could it be that Herodotus is mistaken about these *hamippoi* of Gelon?

These remained and hindered the Athenians from carrying stones or dispersing to any great distance, [4] until a tribe of the Athenian heavy infantry, with all the cavalry, charged and routed the Syracusan horse with some loss; after which they set up a trophy for the cavalry action.²²⁷

The Athenians managed to secure a small victory by deploying both their infantry and their cavalry at the same time. But in the end Athens was defeated.

After the Sicilian Expedition Athenian forces were weakened and the end of the Athenian Empire seemed at hand. During the years 411 – 404 BC Athens nevertheless recovered and fought several naval battles against Sparta. In 411 they fought at Syme and again in 410 at Cyzicus. In 405 Lysander, the Spartan general set sail for the Hellespont, supplier of Athenian grain. The Athenian fleet had no other option than to follow him. Subsequently, Lysander won a decisive victory at the ensuing Battle of Aeguspotami. In 404 BC Athens surrendered, suffering from starvation and disease.

Thebes and Corinth requested the devastation of Athens, but Sparta refused. Sparta put Athens under oligarchic regime, by installing the ‘Thirty Tyrants’. This regime was overthrown in 403 BC by Thrasybulus and democracy was restored.²²⁸

After the Peloponnesian war cavalry was to become increasingly important on the battlefields in the Greek and Eurasian mainland.

²²⁷ Thuc 6.98.

²²⁸ Hell 1 and 2.

3.4. Hegemony of Sparta and the rise of Thebes

Around 401 BC, Spartan hoplites and a number of cavalry attempted to come to the aid of Cyrus the Younger in taking control over Persia from his brother Artaxerxes. Cyrus had managed to secure their help as a result of his own support for Sparta during the Peloponnesian War against Athens. Cyrus died on the battlefield of Cynaxa however and the Spartans and other Greeks were forced to make their way back to Greece through enemy territory. Xenophon participated in this campaign about which, he writes, the Syracusan Themistogenes wrote a report.²²⁹

After this, the Ionic cities feared that they would be destroyed by Tissaphernes as a reprisal for their support for Cyrus and they sought the aid of Sparta. Sparta sent Thibron at the head of an army comprising Helots and Peloponnesians. Thibron requested Athens to supply 300 riders. The Athenians then dispatched people who had supported the regime of the Thirty. Thibron made sure to avoid any confrontation with Persian cavalry.²³⁰

The next commander after Thibron was Dercylidas, also called ‘Sisyphus’ who succeeded in assuaging the Persian satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus and agreeing a truce with them on condition that the Greek cities in Ionia retained their independence from the Persian king. The Spartans at that time were also still at war with Elis.²³¹

One day in 396 BC a Syracusan called Herodas, who visited Phoenicia with a friend, noticed Phoenician war ships lying at anchor in a Phoenician port. He

²²⁹ Hell 3.1.2. According to Plutarch this was a pseudonym of Xenophon, see *De Gloria Atheniensium* 1.

²³⁰ Hell 1.1.3 – 7.

²³¹ Hell 3.2 and 3.3.

heard that there were to be threehundred of them. He assumed that the Persian king and Tissaphernes were preparing an attack on Greece.²³² It was decided in Sparta, on the advice of Lysander, to send an expedition headed by Agesilaus. The Greeks were believed to be better at sea than the Persians, and the land army that had been sent to Cyrus had returned safely in the meantime. He was provided with 30 Spartiatae, two thousand emancipated Helots and six thousand of the allies to make the expedition.²³³ At first, Tissaphernes and Agesilaus agreed a truce, but Agesilaus knew Tissaphernes was deceiving him. The Persian king therefore prepared for war. In his *Hellenica*, Xenophon writes:

Now Tissaphernes, both because Agesilaus had no cavalry (and Caria was unsuited for cavalry), and because he believed that he was angry with him on account of his treachery, made up his mind that he was really going to march against his own residence in Caria, and accordingly sent all his infantry across into that province, and as for his cavalry, he led it round into the plain of the Maeander, thinking that he was strong enough to trample the Greeks under foot with his horsemen before they should reach the regions which were unfit for cavalry. Agesilaus, however, instead of proceeding against Caria, straightway turned in the opposite direction and marched towards Phrygia, and he picked up and led along with him the contingents which met him on the march, subdued the cities, and, since he fell upon them unexpectedly, obtained great quantities of booty.²³⁴

At this point, Xenophon writes that Agesilaus did not yet have access to cavalry and the Persians tried to defeat him before he reached terrain that was

²³² Hell 3.4.1.

²³³ Hell 3.4.2.

²³⁴ Hell 3.4.11 – 12.

not suitable for cavalry, namely, Caria. But Agesilaus was too clever for them. When it came to battle, Agesilaus by chance met the horsemen of Pharnabazus. Here we find an inconsistency, as he now refers to Greek cavalry, which he said Agesilaus did not have. Xenophon again:

‘And by chance the horsemen of Pharnabazus, under the command of Rhathines and Bagaesus, his bastard brother, just about equal to the Greek cavalry in number, had been sent out by Pharnabazus and likewise rode to the top of this same hill. And when the two squadrons saw one another, not so much as four plethra apart, at first both halted, the Greek horsemen being drawn up four deep like a phalanx, and the barbarians with a front of not more than twelve, but many men deep. Then, however, the barbarians charged.

When they came to a hand-to-hand encounter, all of the Greeks who struck anyone broke their spears, while the barbarians, being armed with javelins of cornel-wood, speedily killed twelve men and two horses. Thereupon the Greeks were turned to flight. But when Agesilaus came to the rescue with the hoplites, the barbarians withdrew again and one of them was killed.’²³⁵

Now, according to Xenophon, Agesilaus realised that

unless he obtained an adequate cavalry force, he would not be able to campaign in the plains, he resolved that this must be provided, so that he might not have to carry on a skulking warfare.²³⁶

²³⁵ Hell 3.4.13 – 14.

²³⁶ Hell 3.4.15.

There is an inconsistency here as Agesilaus then proceeded to put his (up to this moment non-existent) cavalry into battle against the enemy cavalry, seeing that their infantry had not yet arrived.

Then Agesilaus, aware that the infantry of the enemy was not yet at hand, while on his side none of the arms which had been made ready was missing, deemed it a fit time to join battle if he could. Therefore, after offering sacrifice, he at once led his phalanx against the opposing line of horsemen, ordering the first ten year-classes of the hoplites to run to close quarters with the enemy, and bidding the peltasts lead the way at a double-quick. He also sent word to his cavalry to attack, in the assurance that he and the whole army were following them. [24] Now the Persians met the attack of the cavalry; but when the whole formidable array together was upon them, they gave way, and some of them were struck down at once in crossing the river, while the rest fled on. And the Greeks, pursuing them, captured their camp as well. Then the peltasts, as was natural, betook themselves to plundering; but Agesilaus enclosed all alike, friends as well as foes, within the circle of his camp. And not only was much other property captured, which fetched more than seventy talents, but it was at this time that the camels also were captured which Agesilaus brought back with him to Greece.²³⁷

Agesilaus was then asked to come to the aid of Lacedaemonia, as Corinth and Athens were threatening Sparta and its allies. He travelled via Thessaly and there gave battle to the mighty Thessalian cavalry.

And Agesilaus, passing through Macedonia, arrived in Thessaly. Then the Larisaeans, Crannonians, Scotussaeans, and Pharsalians, who were allies

²³⁷ Hell 3.4.23 and 24.

of the Boeotians, and in fact all the Thessalians except those of them who chanced at that time to be exiles, followed after him and kept molesting him. [4] And for a time he led the army in a hollow square, with one half of the horsemen in front and the other half at the rear; but when the Thessalians, by charging upon those who were behind, kept interfering with his progress, he sent along to the rear the vanguard of horsemen also, except those about his own person. [5] Now when the two forces had formed in line of battle against one another, the Thessalians, thinking that it was not expedient to engage as cavalry in a battle with hoplites, turned round and slowly retired. [6] And the Greeks very cautiously followed them. Agesilaus, however, perceiving the mistakes which each side was making, sent the very stalwart horsemen who were about his person and ordered them not only to give word to the others to pursue with all speed, but to do likewise themselves, and not to give the Thessalians a chance to face round again. [7] And when the Thessalians saw them rushing upon them unexpectedly, some of them fled, others turned about, and others, in trying to do this, were captured while their horses were turned half round. [8] But Polycharmus the Pharsalian, who was the commander of the cavalry, turned round and fell fighting, together with those about him. When this happened, there followed a headlong flight on the part of the Thessalians, so that some of them were killed and others were captured. At all events they did not stop until they had arrived at Mount Narthacium.²³⁸

According to Xenophon, Agesilaus deployed his army in the formation of a hollow square²³⁹, with his cavalry in front and at the rear. This seems to be a new formation, invented by Agesilaus.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Hell 4.3.3 – 8.

²³⁹ See Appendix E.

When the Thessalian cavalry attacked the rear, he sent all of his cavalry there. He also placed his hoplites in battle formation and the Thessalian cavalry then decided to retreat, as they had no wish to fight hoplites. Agesilaus now used his cavalry to make sure that the Thessalians did not return and in doing so, some of his horsemen actually came into combat with Thessalian cavalry. Agesilaus was very happy with his victory over the Thessalians, who prided themselves upon their horsemanship.²⁴¹

Agesilaus used his cavalry against other cavalry, but always made sure his cavalry was supported by heavy infantry. But Agesilaus was not the only commander to use cavalry in a tactical way. When he left Persia for Greece, because of the summons of Sparta at the start of the Corinthian War (395 – 387 BC) on several occasions he encountered the Boiotians who were always a bitter enemy, as in the battle at Coronea in 394 BC, where the Thebans thought of themselves as undefeated:

[4] But since it proved too hard a task to break the Theban front, they were forced to do what at the outset they were loth to do. They opened their ranks and let the enemy pass through, and then, when these had got clear, and were already marching in looser array, the Spartans followed on the run and smote them on the flanks. They could not, however, put them to rout, but the Thebans withdrew to Mount Helicon, greatly elated over the battle, in which, as they reasoned, their own contingent had been undefeated.²⁴²

Xenophon tells us how Agesilaus defeated the Thebans:

²⁴⁰ M.T.K. Chrimes, *Ancient Sparta: A Re-examination of the evidence* (Manchester University Press 1999) 370.

²⁴¹ Hell 4.3.9.

²⁴² Plut. Ag. 18.4.

Agesilaus and his army crashed against the Thebans front to front; and setting shields against shields they shoved, fought, killed, and were killed. Finally, some of the Thebans broke through and reached Mount Helicon, but many were killed while making their way thither. [20] Now when the victory had fallen to Agesilaus and he himself had been carried, wounded, to the phalanx.²⁴³

Plutarch, however, again tells a different story. According to him, the day after the battle Agesilaus made a truce with the Thebans and regarded himself the victor.²⁴⁴ After this, the Thebans tried to make peace with Sparta and sent envoys to Agesilaus in 390 BC.

Xenophon writes that Agesilaus had more or less pacified the Thebans in 379 BC:

And now that success had to such an extent attended the efforts of the Lacedaemonians that the Thebans and the rest of the Boeotians were completely in their power, the Corinthians had become absolutely faithful, the Argives had been humbled for the reason that their plea of the sacred months was no longer of any help to them, and the Athenians were left destitute of allies, while on the other hand those among the allies of the Lacedaemonians who had been unfriendly to them had been chastised, it seemed that they had at length established their empire most excellently and securely.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ Hell 4.3.20.

²⁴⁴ Plut. Ag. 19.3.

²⁴⁵ Hell 5.3.27.

3.5. The Agesilaus and Epaminondas question

If there really was a peace, it should not come surprisingly that the Spartans were not happy with Agesilaus going into Boeotia to fight the Thebans in 378. As they were apparently anxious to ‘train their enemies’ by doing so, in the words of Plutarch:

But after Sphodrias was acquitted, and the Athenians, on learning of it, were inclined to go to war, Agesilaüs was very harshly criticized. It was thought that, to gratify an absurd and childish desire, he had opposed the course of justice in a trial, and made the city accessory to great crimes against the Greeks. [2] Besides, when he saw that his colleague Cleombrotus was little inclined to make war upon the Thebans, he waived the exemption by law which he had formerly claimed in the matter of the expedition, and presently led an incursion into Boeotia himself, where he inflicted damage upon the Thebans, and in his turn met with reverses, so that one day when he was wounded, Antalcidas said to him: ‘Indeed, this is a fine tuition-fee which thou art getting from the Thebans, for teaching them how to fight when they did not wish to do it, and did not even know how.’ [3] For the Thebans are said to have been really more warlike at this time than ever before, owing to the many expeditions which the Lacedaemonians made against them, by which they were virtually schooled in arms. And Lycurgus of old, in one of his three so-called ‘rhetras,’ forbade his people to make frequent expeditions against the same foes, in order that those foes might not learn how to make war.²⁴⁶

Xenophon says that Agesilaus was asked by the Spartans themselves to do this, because they would rather have him as a leader:

²⁴⁶ Plut. Ag. 26.1-3.

[35] The Lacedaemonians on their side called out the ban against the Thebans, and believing that Agesilaus would lead them with more judgment than Cleombrotus, requested him to act as commander of the army. And he, saying that he would offer no objection to whatever the state thought best, made his preparations for the campaign.²⁴⁷

The next passage is an example of how Agesilaus used hoplites together with cavalry in order to fight off the Theban cavalry, as Xenophon relates of a battle near the Cithaeron in 378 BC:

But when Agesilaus turned about and came to the rescue with the hoplites, his horsemen charged against the enemy's horsemen and the first ten year-classes of the hoplites ran along with them to the attack. The Theban horsemen, however, acted like men who had drunk a little at midday; for although they awaited the oncoming enemy in order to throw their spears, they threw before they were within range. Still, though they turned about at so great a distance, twelve of them were killed.²⁴⁸

Xenophon sums up these battles in *Agesilaus* as follows:

[22] It was in the same spirit that he subsequently made an expedition against Thebes,²⁴⁹ to relieve the Lacedaemonians in that city when their opponents had taken to murdering them. Finding the city protected on all sides by a trench and stockade, he crossed the Pass of Cynoscephalae, and laid waste the country up to the city walls, offering battle to the Thebans

²⁴⁷ Hell 5.4.35.

²⁴⁸ Hell 5.4.41.

²⁴⁹ In 378 BC.

both on the plain and on the hills, if they chose to fight. In the following year he made another expedition against Thebes, and, after crossing the stockade and trenches at Scolus, laid waste the rest of Boeotia. [23]

Up to this time he and his city enjoyed unbroken success; and though the following years brought a series of troubles, it cannot be said that they were incurred under the leadership of Agesilaus.²⁵⁰

Xenophon certainly tries to justify Agesilaus' actions in Boeotia and does not seem to want to give the Thebans their due. Agesilaus fell ill in 377 BC after another ruse into Theban territory. It would appear that during the years after he fell ill, the Lacedaemonian cavalry underwent a decline which manifested itself in the Battle at Leuctra in 371 BC, according to Xenophon:

In the second place, since the space between the armies was a plain, the Lacedaemonians posted their horsemen in front of their phalanx, and the Thebans in like manner posted theirs over against them. Now the cavalry of the Thebans was in good training as a result of the war with the Orchomenians and the war with the Thespians, while the cavalry of the Lacedaemonians was exceedingly poor at that time. [11] For the richest men kept the horses, and it was only when the ban was called out that the appointed trooper presented himself; then he would get his horse and such arms as were given him, and take the field on the moment's notice. As for the men, on the other hand, it was those who were least strong of body and least ambitious who were mounted on the horses.²⁵¹

(...) Now when Cleombrotus began to lead his army against the enemy, in the first place, before the troops under him so much as perceived that

²⁵⁰ Ag 2.22-23.

²⁵¹ Hell 6.4.10 – 11.

he was advancing, the horsemen had already joined battle and those of the Lacedaemonians had speedily been worsted; then in their flight they had fallen foul of their own hoplites, and, besides, the companies of the Thebans were now charging upon them. Nevertheless, the fact that Cleombrotus and his men were at first victorious in the battle may be known from this clear indication: they would not have been able to take him up and carry him off still living, had not those who were fighting in front of him been holding the advantage at that time.

[14] But when Deinon, the polemarch, Sphodrias, one of the king's tent-companions, and Cleonymus, the son of Sphodrias, had been killed, then the royal bodyguard, the so-called aides of the polemarch, and the others fell back under the pressure of the Theban mass, while those who were on the left wing of the Lacedaemonians, when they saw that the right wing was being pushed back, gave way. Yet despite the fact that many had fallen and that they were defeated, after they had crossed the trench which chanced to be in front of their camp they grounded their arms at the spot from which they had set forth. The camp, to be sure, was not on ground which was altogether level, but rather on the slope of a hill. After the disaster some of the Lacedaemonians, thinking it unendurable, said that they ought to prevent the enemy from setting up their trophy and to try to recover the bodies of the dead, not by means of a truce, but by fighting.²⁵²

But are we to believe Xenophon and his story of the Spartan cavalry? Xenophon was not entirely honest in his account of this battle and failed to mention Epaminondas. Plutarch was more to the point:

²⁵² Hell 6.4.13 and 14.

In the battle, while Epaminondas was drawing his phalanx obliquely towards the left, in order that the right wing of the Spartans might be separated as far as possible from the rest of the Greeks, and that he might thrust back Cleombrotus by a fierce charge in column with all his men-at-arms, the enemy understood what he was doing and began to change their formation; [2] they were opening up their right wing and making an encircling movement, in order to surround Epaminondas and envelop him with their numbers. But at this point Pelopidas darted forth from his position, and with his band of three hundred on the run, came up before Cleombrotus had either extended his wing or brought it back again into its old position and closed up his line of battle, so that the Lacedaemonians were not standing in array, but moving confusedly about among each other when his onset reached them. [3] And yet the Spartans, who were of all men past masters in the art of war, trained and accustomed themselves to nothing so much as not to straggle or get into confusion upon a change of formation, but to take anyone without exception as neighbour in rank or in file, and wheresoever danger actually threatened, to seize that point and form in close array and fight as well as ever. [4] At this time, however, since the phalanx of Epaminondas bore down upon them alone and neglected the rest of their force, and since Pelopidas engaged them with incredible speed and boldness, their courage and skill were so confounded that there was a flight and slaughter of the Spartans such as had never before been seen. Therefore, although Epaminondas was boeotarch, Pelopidas, who was not boeotarch, and commanded only a small portion of the whole force, won as much glory for the success of that victory as he did.²⁵³

²⁵³ Plut. Pel. 23.

In the battle at Tegyra (375 BC), which Xenophon, convenient for his own cause, does not mention at all, the Boeotians probably for the first time fought with the cavalry in dense formation in front of their infantry.

The Theban force was heavily outnumbered by the Spartans opposite them. The Sacred Band numbered some 300 hoplites, while the Spartan garrison consisted of two companies, meaning that the Spartan force contained between 1,000 and 1,800 hoplites. Plutarch reports that one Theban soldier, upon seeing the enemy force, said to Pelopidas "We are fallen into our enemies' hands," to which Pelopidas replied "And why not they into ours?" Pelopidas then ordered the Theban cavalry to charge while the infantry formed up into an abnormally dense formation. When the two phalanxes came together, the compact Theban formation broke through the Spartan line at the point of contact, then turned to attack the vulnerable flanks of the Spartans to either side. The Spartan force broke and fled, although the Theban pursuit was limited by the proximity of Orchomenus.²⁵⁴

And Plutarch tells us even more on this specific battle:

During this time the Spartans met with many reverses both by land and sea, the greatest of which was at Tegyra, where for the first time they were overpowered by the Thebans in a pitched battle.²⁵⁵

Xenophon seems to be on the defense regarding his friend Agesilaus. And there is more. After this first defeat in 375 BC many cities in Greece sent embassies

²⁵⁴ Plut. Pel. 17.

²⁵⁵ Plut. Ag. 27.3.

to Sparta, one of the ambassadors was a Theban named Epaminondas, a man of culture and philosophy:

This man, seeing the rest all cringing before Agesilaüs, alone had the courage of his convictions, and made a speech, not in behalf of Thebes, his native city, but of all Greece in common, declaring that war made Sparta great at the expense of the sufferings of all the other states, and urging that peace be made on terms of equality and justice, for it would endure only when all parties to it were made equal.²⁵⁶

Plutarch tells us that

Agesilaus, accordingly, seeing that the Greeks all listened to Epaminondas with the greatest attention and admiration, asked him whether he considered it justice and equality that the cities of Boeotia should be independent of Thebes. Then when Epaminondas promptly and boldly asked him in reply whether he too thought it justice for the cities of Laconia to be independent of Sparta, Agesilaus sprang from his seat and wrathfully bade him say plainly whether he intended to make the cities of Boeotia independent. [2] And when Epaminondas answered again in the same way by asking whether he intended to make the cities of Laconia independent, Agesilaus became violent and was glad of the pretext for at once erasing the name of the Thebans from the treaty of peace and declaring war upon them.²⁵⁷

Xenophon tells a completely different story as he does not mention Epaminondas and he says the Thebans had signed as Thebans, but on the next day wished to substitute the name of Boeotians for Thebans. He says that

²⁵⁶ Plut. Ag. 27.4.

²⁵⁷ Plut. Ag. 28.1-2.

Agesilaus refused to permit this as it would have recognized the supremacy of Thebes in Boeotia.²⁵⁸

Plutarch also tells us that the ensuing battle at Leuctra was apparently more an action of anger than calculation:

At this time Cleombrotus was in Phocis with an army. The ephors therefore immediately sent him orders to lead his forces against Thebes. They also sent round a summons for an assembly of their allies, who were without zeal for the war and thought it a great burden, but were not yet bold enough to oppose or disobey the Lacedaemonians. [4] And although many baleful signs appeared, as I have written in my *Life of Epaminondas*,²⁵⁹ and though Prothouüs the Laconian made opposition to the expedition, Agesilaüs would not give in, but brought the war to pass. He thought that since all Hellas was on their side, and the Thebans had been excluded from the treaty, it was a favourable time for the Spartans to take vengeance on them. [5] But the time chosen for it proves that this expedition was made from anger more than from careful calculation. For the treaty of peace was made at Lacedaemon on the fourteenth of the month Scirophorion, and on the fifth of Hecatombaeon the Lacedaemonians were defeated at Leuctra,—an interval of twenty days. In that battle a thousand Lacedaemonians fell, besides Cleombrotus the king, and around him the mightiest of the Spartans.²⁶⁰

After this battle at Leuctra in 371 BC in which Thebes again defeated Sparta, the Athenians were becoming more and more nervous about a Boeotian

²⁵⁸ Hell 6.3.19.

²⁵⁹ Unfortunately this work is not extant.

²⁶⁰ Plut. Ag. 28.3-5.

domination. Athens wanted to ally itself with Sparta. Athens regarded itself as a leader at sea, and Sparta as a leader on land.²⁶¹

In 370 BC Agesilaus freed the polis of Mantinea of the Thebans, but he carefully avoided any military confrontations with them.²⁶² In the same year though, Epaminondas invaded Laconia and tried to conquer Sparta itself. Agesilaus met with not only contempt by the Boeotians, but also with criticism of his own people. And

He was also distressed at the thought of what his fame would be, because he had taken command of the city when she was greatest and most powerful, and now saw her reputation lowered, and her proud boast made empty, which boast he himself also had often made, saying that no Spartan woman had ever seen the smoke of an enemy's fires.²⁶³

After three months of ravaging the Lacedaemonian country, Epaminondas withdrew his forces. Three reasons are mentioned by Xenophon:

As for the enemy in Lacedaemon, many Arcadians, Argives, and Eleans had already departed, inasmuch as they lived just across the border, some of them leading and others carrying what they had taken as plunder. On the¹ other hand, the Thebans and the rest were desirous of departing from the country, partly for the very reason that they saw their army growing daily smaller, and partly because provisions were scantier, the supply having

²⁶¹ Hell 6.5.33 – 51.

²⁶² Plut. Ag. 30.5; Hell 6.5.10-21.

²⁶³ Plut. Ag. 31.5.

been in part used up or stolen away, in part wasted or burned up; besides, it was winter, so that by this time all alike wanted to withdraw.²⁶⁴

But according to Plutarch there was another, maybe more compelling reason why the Thebans suddenly left Lacedaemon:

Theopompus says that when the Theban chief magistrates had already determined to take their army back, Phrixus, a Spartan, came to them, bringing ten talents from Agesilaüs to pay for their withdrawal, so that they were only doing what they had long ago decided to do, and had their expenses paid by their enemies besides.²⁶⁵

After these events, Agesilaus declined military service on account of his age and his son Archidamus took his place. Archidamus conquered the Arcadians in the Tearless Battle.²⁶⁶

But when Messene was built by Epaminondas, and its former citizens flocked into it from all quarters, the Spartans had not the courage to contest the issue nor the ability to hinder it, but cherished the deepest resentment against Agesilaus, because a country which was not of less extent than their own, which stood first among Hellenic lands for its fertility, the possession and fruits of which they had enjoyed for so long a time, had been lost by them during his reign. [2] For this reason, too, Agesilaus would not accept the peace which was proffered by the Thebans. He was not willing to give up to them formally the country which was actually in their power, and persisted in his opposition. As a consequence, he not only did not recover

²⁶⁴ Hell 6.5.50.

²⁶⁵ Plut. Ag. 32.8.

²⁶⁶ Plut. Ag. 33.

Messenia, but almost lost Sparta besides, after being outgeneralled. [3] For when the Mantineans changed their allegiance [in 369 BC] and revolted from Thebes, and called in the Lacedaemonians to help them, Epaminondas, learning that Agesilaus had marched out from Sparta with his forces and was approaching, set out by night from Tegea, without the knowledge of the Mantineans, and led his army against Sparta itself. He passed by Agesilaus, and came within a little of suddenly seizing the city in a defenceless state.²⁶⁷

Xenophon does not mention that Agesilaus nearly lost Sparta, but goes on speaking of the forging of an alliance between Sparta and Athens on the basis of equality.²⁶⁸

In 362 BC, the Theban general Epaminondas decided to fight at Mantinea, deploying cavalry ahead of its infantry in a dense formation again. He formed them as a phalanx, six deep and with a square column formation which was to push its way through the Athenian lines. He also had cavalry on the wings to incite fear, that these would fall on the army after the centre had given way. He succeeded in his plans, but he was wounded during the battle as he fought in the front line and died shortly afterwards.²⁶⁹

The Thebans had lost their hope of hegemony after his death because he had forced them to agree to a peace treaty with Sparta and Athens. They still clinged to his advocacy of this treaty at the embassy before the battle at Leuctra. Epaminondas then foretold that all Greek cities would be weakened by an ongoing war between them. He was right because all poleis were weakened by

²⁶⁷ Plut. Ag. 34.1-3.

²⁶⁸ Hell 7.1.

²⁶⁹ Hell 7.5.15 – 24.

the outcome of this battle and after 362 BC, Greece was to remain in a state of confusion.²⁷⁰

But Agesilaus could not give in to peace, which was held against him by the Spartans and his reputation would soon diminish, as Plutarch tells us:

After the battle and the death of Epaminondas, when the Greeks concluded peace among themselves, Agesilaüs and his partisans tried to exclude the Messenians from the oath of ratification, on the ground that they had no city. [3] And when all the rest admitted the Messenians and accepted their oaths, the Lacedaemonians held aloof from the peace, and they alone remained at war in the hope of recovering Messenia. Agesilaüs was therefore deemed a headstrong and stubborn man, and insatiable of war, since he did all in his power to undermine and postpone the general peace, and again since his lack of resources compelled him to lay burdens on his friends in the city and to take loans and contributions from them. [4] And yet it was his duty to put an end to their evils, now that opportunity offered, and not, after having lost Sparta's whole empire, vast as it was, with its cities and its supremacy on land and sea, then to carry on a petty struggle for the goods and revenues of Messene.²⁷¹

Eventually Agesilaus died in 360 BC in Egypt, serving as a mercenary.

²⁷⁰ Hell 7.5. and *Poroi* 5.8.

²⁷¹ Plut. Ag. 35.2.-4.

3.6. Xenophon and the Threat of Thebes

After the battle at Mantinea, Xenophon still regarded Thebes as the major enemy, despite the fact that peace reigned at that moment between Thebes and Athens. For instance, in his *Cavalry Commander*, he wrote:

‘The Athenian cavalry commander, however, should excel greatly both in the observance of his duty to the gods and in the qualities of a warrior, seeing that he has on his borders rivals in the shape of cavalry as numerous as his and large forces of infantry. [2] And if he attempts to invade the enemy's country without the other armed forces of the state, he will have to take his chance with the cavalry only against both arms. Or if the enemy invades Athenian territory, in the first place, he will certainly not fail to bring with him other cavalry besides his own and infantry in addition, whose numbers he reckons to be more than a match for all the Athenians put together. [3] Now provided that the whole of the city's levies turn out against such a host in defence of their country, the prospects are good. For our cavalrymen, God helping, will be the better, if proper care is taken of them, and our heavy infantry will not be inferior in numbers, and I may add, they will be in as good condition and will show the keener spirit, if only, with God's help, they are trained on the right lines. And, remember, the Athenians are quite as proud of their ancestry as the Boeotians. [4] But if the city falls back on her navy, and is content to keep her walls intact, as in the days when the Lacedaemonians invaded us with all the Greeks to help them, and if she expects her cavalry to protect all that lies outside the walls, and to take its chance unaided against her foes,—why then, I suppose, we need first the strong arm of the gods to aid us, and in the second place it is essential that our cavalry commander should be masterly.

For much sagacity is called for in coping with a greatly superior force, and abundance of courage when the call comes.’²⁷²

In the final sentences of this passage Xenophon warns that the Athenians will need to put a good commander in charge of their cavalry, otherwise they will not be capable of fighting a superior force. With his reference to a superior force, he clearly meant the city of Thebes. Xenophon, like many other Athenians and Spartans, such as Agesilaus, had a fierce hatred for Thebes and witnessed with dismay the rise of the Boeotian League after the defeat of Sparta at Leuctra. He tried to warn the Athenians to take heed of the Boeotians:

‘The Athenian cavalry commander, however, should excel greatly both in the observance of his duty to the gods and in the qualities of a warrior, seeing that he has on his borders rivals in the shape of cavalry as numerous as his and large forces of infantry. And if he attempts to invade the enemy’s country without the other armed forces of the state, he will have to take his chance with the cavalry only against both arms. Or if the enemy invades Athenian territory, in the first place, he will certainly not fail to bring with him other cavalry besides his own and infantry in addition, whose numbers he reckons to be more than a match for all the Athenians put together. (...) And remember, the Athenians are quite as proud of their ancestry as the Boeotians.’²⁷³

If we accept this to be the case, his reference to which *metoikoi* should be serving in the Athenian cavalry would be all the more clear:

²⁷² CC 7.1-5.

²⁷³ CC 7. 1 – 3

I fancy, too, that infantry attached to the cavalry will be most effective if it consists of persons who are very bitter against the enemy.²⁷⁴

Despite his fiery hate for Thebes it is interesting to note that Xenophon could not but be in awe of Epaminondas' military insight. He certainly had learned from Epaminondas, who he even accorded some praise in his *Hellenica*:

‘[19] Now the fact that Epaminondas himself entertained such thoughts, seems to me to be in no wise remarkable, — for such thoughts are natural to ambitious men; but that he had brought his army to such a point that the troops flinched from no toil, whether by night or by day, and shrank from no peril, and although the provisions they had were scanty, were nevertheless willing to be obedient, this seems to me to be more remarkable. [20] For at the time when he gave them the last order to make ready, saying that there would be a battle, the horsemen eagerly whitened their helmets at his command, the hoplites of the Arcadians painted clubs upon their shields, as though they were Thebans, and all alike sharpened their spears and daggers and burnished their shields. [21] But when he had led them forth, thus made ready, it is worth while again to note what he did.’²⁷⁵

Xenophon analysed these Theban cavalry tactics and referred to it in his *Cavalry Commander*. His purpose in so doing was to inform the Athenians who, he hoped, would be attentive to his warnings and recommendations and pay heed to them in defending their state in the event of war.

²⁷⁴ CC 9.7.

²⁷⁵ Hell 7.5.19-21.

The Square Formation

Where as Agesilaus used a hollow square formation for marching²⁷⁶, with cavalry in front and at the rear, Xenophon recommended the use of a (full) square formation when marching or fielding the cavalry:

‘When your men are well trained in all these points, they must, of course, understand some plan of formation, that in which they will show to greatest advantage in the sacred processions and at manoeuvres, fight, if need be, with the greatest courage, and move along roads and cross rivers with perfect ease in unbroken order.

(...) To use an illustration, steel has most power to cut through steel when its edge is keen and its back reliable. (...) You must be very careful to appoint a competent man as leader in the rear. For if he is a good man, his cheers will always hearten the ranks in front of him in case it becomes necessary to charge; or, should the moment come to retreat, his prudent leadership will, in all probability, do much for the safety of his regiment.

An even number of file-leaders has this advantage over an odd, that it is possible to divide the regiment into a larger number of equal parts.²⁷⁷

Xenophon explained why he preferred this technique:

The reasons why I like this formation are these. In the first place, all the men in the front rank are officers; and the obligation to distinguish themselves appeals more strongly to men when they are officers than when they are privates. Secondly, when anything has to be done, the word of

²⁷⁶ Hell 3.4.20 in the battle at Sardis in 395 BC and also at Coronea in 394 BC against Thessaly. See for example: Ag 2.2.

²⁷⁷ CC 2.1; 2.3; 2.5.

command is much more effective if it is passed to officers rather than to privates.

Let us assume that this formation has been adopted: every file-leader must know his position in the line of march by word passed along by the colonel, just as every colonel is informed by the commander of his proper place in the charge. For when these instructions are given there will be much better order than if the men hamper one another like a crowd leaving the theatre. And in the event of a frontal attack, the men in the van are far more willing to fight when they know that this is their station; so is the rear-rank in the event of a surprise attack in the rear, when the men there understand that it is disgraceful to leave their post. But if no order is kept there is confusion whenever the roads are narrow or rivers are being crossed; and when an action is fought no one voluntarily takes his post in the fighting line.²⁷⁸

This formation was used by Epaminondas at Leuctra in 371 BC.

[10] In the second place, since the space between the armies was a plain, the Lacedaemonians posted their horsemen in front of their phalanx, and the Thebans in like manner posted theirs over against them.

(...) the horsemen had already joined battle and those of the Lacedaemonians had speedily been worsted; then in their flight they had fallen foul of their own hoplites, and, besides, the companies of the Thebans were now charging upon them.²⁷⁹

Although Xenophon implies that the Thebans imitated the Spartans by doing so, as maybe clear by now, the opposite is more likely to have happened.

²⁷⁸ CC 2.5-7.

²⁷⁹ Hell 6.4.10.

Attack and Flight

Xenophon makes no reference to the exact Boeotian cavalry tactics in his account of the Battle at Leuctra in 371 BC. Plutarch on the other hand does speak about these Boeotian tactics, as he was a Boeotian himself his might be a plausible story:

for they were not pitched battles, nor was the fighting in open and regular array, but it was by making well-timed sallies, and by either retreating before the enemy or by pursuing and coming to close quarters with them that the Thebans won their successes.²⁸⁰

Although in his *Hellenica* he hardly mentions the Boeotian tactics, in his *Cavalry Commander* Xenophon explains that the cavalry should move in formation to keep order and that men in formation with some of their superiors behind them will be more willing to fight in the event of a frontal attack. He then writes that the cavalry should also be capable of ‘attack and flight’ tactics:

Suppose now that the cavalry are busy in the no-man's-land that separates two battle lines drawn up face to face or two strategic positions, wheeling, pursuing and retreating. After such manoeuvres both sides usually start off at a slow pace, but gallop at full speed in the unoccupied ground. But if a commander first feints in this manner, and then after wheeling, pursues and retreats at the gallop he will be able to inflict the greatest loss on the enemy, and will probably come through with the least harm, by pursuing at the gallop so long as he is near his own defence, and retreating at the gallop from the enemy's

²⁸⁰ Plut. Pel. 15.5.

defences. If, moreover, he can secretly leave behind him four or five of the best horses and men in each division, they will be at a great advantage in falling on the enemy as he is turning to renew the charge.²⁸¹

In this last paragraph, Xenophon suggests that cavalry should line itself up in the no-man's-land between infantry battle lines with an as large as possible front. In this no-man's-land, the cavalry should take strategic positions and harass the opposing side while wheeling, pursuing and retreating. This harassing tactic will become more effective if the commander keeps four or five of his best horses and riders hidden behind the infantry, so that the enemy will be surprised at his next attack.²⁸² The infantry should then appear from behind the cavalry to surprise the enemy.²⁸³ Before this section, he writes that he would rather have a small regiment of cavalry than a large one.²⁸⁴

Xenophon admits that 'our cavalrymen are not accustomed to these movements' and these are 'novel feats of skill'.²⁸⁵ Referring to the above 'attack and flight' tactic, he says: 'I think that these manoeuvres would look more like war and would have the charm of novelty'.²⁸⁶ In fact these were Boeotian tactics, and Xenophon had hoped that Athens could employ Boeotian tactics in order to defeat Thebes.

²⁸¹ CC 8.23-25.

²⁸² CC 8.25.

²⁸³ CC 8.23-25.

²⁸⁴ CC 8.16.

²⁸⁵ CC 3.5.

²⁸⁶ CC 3.13.

Hamippoi

In the Battle at Leuctra (371 BC), Xenophon saw how Epaminondas deployed his cavalry and *hamippoi* and was victorious against the Spartans. The Spartans tried to fight the Thebans with their own cavalry tactics by using *hamippoi* themselves, according to Xenophon:

In the second place, since the space between the armies was a plain, the Lacedaemonians posted their horsemen in front of their phalanx, and the Thebans in like manner posted theirs over against them. Now the cavalry of the Thebans was in good training as a result of the war with the Orchomenians and the war with the Thespians, while the cavalry of the Lacedaemonians was exceedingly poor at that time. [11] For the richest men kept the horses, and it was only when the ban was called out that the appointed trooper presented himself; then he would get his horse and such arms as were given him, and take the field on the moment's notice. As for the men, on the other hand, it was those who were least strong of body and least ambitious who were mounted on the horses.²⁸⁷

[31] And the horsemen of the Lacedaemonians, seemingly very few in number, were formed in line against them. Meanwhile the Lacedaemonians had set an ambush of the younger hoplites, about three hundred in number, in the house of the Tyndaridae, and at the same moment these men rushed forth and their horsemen charged. The enemy, however, did not await their attack, but gave way. And on seeing this, many of the foot-soldiers also took to flight. But when the

²⁸⁷ Hell 6.4.10 – 11.

pursuers stopped and the army of the Thebans stood firm, the enemy encamped again.²⁸⁸

According to Xenophon, Agesilaus has used this technique in another battle against the Thebans²⁸⁹ and made an attempt to fight the Thebans using their own tactics against them:

But when Agesilaus turned about and came to the rescue with the hoplites, his horsemen charged against the enemy's horsemen and the first ten year-classes of the hoplites ran along with them to the attack. The Theban horsemen, however, acted like men who had drunk a little at midday; for although they awaited the oncoming enemy in order to throw their spears, they threw before they were within range. Still, though they turned about at so great a distance, twelve of them were killed.²⁹⁰

In the Cavalry Commander he refers a number of times to the cavalry formation called *hamippous pezous*.²⁹¹ A Boeotian tactic, where a heavily armed infantry worked in close cooperation with the cavalry on the battlefield. A cavalry attacking a line of battle in an attempt to break the lines is followed by the *hamippoi*, who either charge simultaneously with the cavalry or follow close behind.²⁹² He refers only here to *hamippoi*, whereas elsewhere he uses the term *pezoi*.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ Hell 6.5.31.

²⁸⁹ Battle at Thespieae in 378 BC which he fought after having crossed Mount Cithaeron.

²⁹⁰ Hell 5.3.40.

²⁹¹ CC 5.13.

²⁹² Ag 1.31: Heavy infantry of 10 years with the cavalry.

²⁹³ CC 8.19.

“infantry attached to cavalry will be most effective if it consists of persons who are very bitter against the enemy”²⁹⁴

He keeps extolling the virtues of the *hamippoi*:

“Another duty of a cavalry commander is to demonstrate to the city the weakness of cavalry destitute of infantry as compared with cavalry that has infantry attached to it. Further, having got his infantry, a cavalry commander should make use of it. A mounted man being much higher than a man on foot, infantry may be hidden away not only among the cavalry but in the rear as well.”²⁹⁵

Apparently, Xenophon wanted the Athenians to employ a Boeotian tactic and advised them to do so. In recommending this tactic, it seems he made it look like it had been devised by Agesilaus. The Spartans only used cavalry for the first time at the end of the Peloponnesian War²⁹⁶ and according to Thucydides, *hamippoi* had already been used by the Thebans in 419 BC. *Hamippoi* were first used in the Peloponnesian War by the Boeotian cavalry. These Boeotian *hamippoi* were dispatched against Athens in 419/418 BC, as Thucydides explained:

The Tegeans and the other Arcadian allies of Lacedaemon joined in the expedition. The allies from the rest of Peloponnese and from outside mustered at Phlius; the Boeotians with five thousand heavy infantry and

²⁹⁴ CC 9.7.

²⁹⁵ CC 5.13.

²⁹⁶ Connolly (2006) 40.

as many light troops, and five hundred horse and the same number of *Hamippoi*.²⁹⁷

It may well be that the heavy infantry which came to the aid of the Boeotian cavalry and so defeated the Athenian and Thessalian cavalry were also *Hamippoi*.²⁹⁸ But Thucydides was not clear on this. This is the first time that *Hamippoi* are mentioned. It is possible that the Boeotians devised this type of cavalry in order to be capable of fighting the Thessalian cavalry which, according to Simon,²⁹⁹ was the most powerful cavalry in Greece, though unwilling to fight hoplites in battle formation.³⁰⁰ In the above passages from Xenophon, this would seem to be the first time that the *Hamippoi* are mentioned.

Mantineia, 362 BC

Xenophon continues to make much reference in his *Cavalry Commander* to the tactics used by Epaminondas in the battle at Mantineia. As we have previously seen, he had a deep admiration for Epaminondas, despite his hate of Thebes. I will outline below the various phases of the battle which Xenophon described, and cite Xenophon's advice in that regard.

Epaminondas excelled in the art of concealment and deception:

[21] But when he had led them forth, thus made ready, it is worth while again to note what he did. In the first place, as was natural, he formed them in line of battle. And by doing this he seemed to make it clear that

²⁹⁷ Thuc 5.57.2.

²⁹⁸ Thuc 2.22.

²⁹⁹ Simon, *De Re Equestri* 1.

³⁰⁰ Hell 4.3.5-9.

he was preparing for an engagement; but when his army had been drawn up as he wished it to be, he did not advance by the shortest route towards the enemy, but led the way towards the mountains which lie to the westward and over against Tegea, so that he gave the enemy the impression that he would not join battle on that day.³⁰¹

Xenophon likewise advised on concealment and deception:

[11] And on thinking over the successes gained in war you will find that most of them, and these the greatest, have been won with the aid of deception. For these reasons either you should not essay to command, or you should pray to heaven that your equipment may include this qualification, and you should contrive on your own part to possess it.³⁰²

[15] Another ruse that proves highly effective at times is to feign excess of caution and reluctance to take risks. For this pretence often lures the enemy into making a more fatal blunder through want of caution. Or once come to be thought venturesome, and you can give the enemy trouble by merely sitting still and pretending that you are on the point of doing something.³⁰³

In using these tactics, Epaminondas was capable of luring the enemy into a ‘relaxation of their readiness’ and then would fall upon them unexpectedly, when they were dismounted and much more vulnerable to attack:

[22] For as soon as he had arrived at the mountain, and when his battle line had been extended to its full length, he grounded arms at the foot of the

³⁰¹ Hell 7.5.21.

³⁰² CC 5.11.

³⁰³ CC 5.15.

heights, so that he seemed like one who was encamping. And by so doing he caused among most of the enemy a relaxation of their mental readiness for fighting, and likewise a relaxation of their readiness as regards their array for battle. It was not until he had moved along successive companies to the wing where he was stationed, and had wheeled them into line thus strengthening the mass formation of this wing, that he gave the order to take up arms and led the advance; and his troops followed. Now as soon as the enemy saw them unexpectedly approaching, no one among them was able to keep quiet, but some began running to their posts, others forming into line, others bridling horses, and others putting on breast-plates, while all were like men who were about to suffer, rather than to inflict, harm.³⁰⁴

Xenophon likewise advised on not having the entire cavalry dismount when the enemy was nearby:

‘but when it is uncertain whether you will encounter an enemy on your way to any place, you must give the regiments a rest in turn. For it would be a bad job if all the men were dismounted when the enemy is close at hand.’³⁰⁵

According to Xenophon, Epaminondas used his cavalry in front of his infantry, while leaving behind the less effective part of the army. He recognised how small victories or setbacks in battle had a psychological effect on his own army and on that of the enemy:

[23] Meanwhile Epaminondas led forward his army prow on, like a trireme, believing that if he could strike and cut through anywhere, he would destroy the entire army of his adversaries. For he was preparing to

³⁰⁴ Hell 7.5.22.

³⁰⁵ CC 4.2.

make the contest with the strongest part of his force, and the weakest part he had stationed far back, knowing that if defeated it would cause discouragement to the troops who were with him and give courage to the enemy.³⁰⁶

Xenophon advised likewise:

[10] I want to add a word of warning against another error. Some men, when they suppose themselves to be stronger than the enemy whom they are going to attack, take an utterly inadequate force with them.

The consequence is that they are apt to incur the loss they expected to inflict. Or, when they know themselves to be weaker than the enemy, they use all their available strength in the attack.

[11] The right procedure, in my opinion, is just the opposite: when the commander expects to win, he should not hesitate to use the whole of his strength: for an overwhelming victory never yet was followed by remorse.

[12] But when he tries conclusions with a much stronger force, knowing beforehand that he is bound to retreat when he has done his best, I hold that it is far better in such a case to throw a small part of his strength into the attack than the whole of it; only horses and men alike should be his very best. For such a force will be able to achieve something and to retreat with less risk.³⁰⁷

Epaminondas himself therefore led his force in a battle formation with his cavalry ahead of his infantry to cut through the enemy lines, whereas the Athenians merely had fielded their cavalry without any infantry support:

³⁰⁶ Hell 7.5.23.

³⁰⁷ CC 8.10 – 12.

Again, while the enemy had formed their horsemen like a phalanx of hoplites, — six deep and without intermingled foot soldiers,³⁰⁸

Epaminondas made good use of his cavalry and *hamippoi* in a battle formation:

[24] Epaminondas on the other hand had made a strong column of his cavalry, also, and had mingled foot soldiers among them, believing that when he cut through the enemy's cavalry, he would have defeated the entire opposing army; for it is very hard to find men who will stand firm when they see any of their own side in flight.³⁰⁹

Although the battle at Mantinea is renowned for what seems to have been the first deployment of a wedge formation, this is not described by Xenophon in both his *Hellenica* or his *Cavalry Commander*. Nor is it described by Diodorus Siculus in his account of this battle or by any other author.³¹⁰

Xenophon does say that Epaminondas led his army ‘prow on like a trireme’, using the adiective ‘ἀντίπρωρον’. This can be translated as ‘head on’ or ‘frontally’³¹¹. Xenophon applies this term to wheeling of the Spartan *lochoi* in parallel columns to the right to meet an attack on the line of march.³¹² Epaminondas led his cavalry and infantry force in a deepened phalanx forward which wanted to use as a wedge to split up the enemy formation, which is described by the word ἔμβολον.³¹³

³⁰⁸ Hell 7.5.23.

³⁰⁹ Hell 7.5.24.

³¹⁰ Diodorus Siculus 15.85.4.

³¹¹ See the lemma in Liddell Scott James.

³¹² Xenophon, *Lakedaimonion Politeia* 11.10.

³¹³ According to J.K. Anderson (1970) 326 and 327 in his explanation of this Greek word in which he says that ἔμβολον did not mean ‘wedge formation’ in Xenophon’s time. According to Anderson confusion began with Arrian using this word mistakenly. See also Arrian, *Tactics* 11.2.

Epaminondas believed that he could cut through the ranks of the enemy cavalry in a frontal attack of his cavalry in a battle formation, supported by his infantry which was intermingled with his cavalry.³¹⁴ He might have used his cavalry in a dense phalanx to push its way through enemy lines, either cavalry or infantry, followed immediately after first impact by hoplites.³¹⁵

In the *Cavalry Commander* Xenophon mentions this ‘cutting through steel’ ability of the square formation if it is rightly put in line with the best men who are ‘bent on winning fame by some brilliant deed’.

I hold that within these you should, to begin with, appoint file-leaders after consulting each of the colonels, choosing sturdy men, who are bent on winning fame by some brilliant deed. These should form the front rank. [3] Next you should choose an equal number of the oldest and most sensible to form the rear rank. To use an illustration, steel has most power to cut through steel when its edge is keen and its back reliable.³¹⁶

So this ‘cutting through steel’ remark can clearly make a reference to Boeotian cavalry tactics.

Furthermore, Epaminondas understood the impact of psychological warfare:

And in order to prevent the Athenians on the left wing from coming to the aid of those who were posted next to them, he stationed both horsemen and

³¹⁴ He was not mistaken, according to Hell 7.5.24: ‘Thus, then, he made his attack, and he was not disappointed of his hope; for by gaining the mastery at the point where he struck, he caused the entire army of his adversaries to flee.’

³¹⁵ For a drawing of this deepened phalanx, see Appendix E.

³¹⁶ CC 2.2-4.

hoplites upon some hills over against them, desiring to create in them the fear that if they proceeded to give aid, these troops would fall upon them from behind.

Xenophon also makes mention of the psychological impact:

‘Create a scare among the enemy when your own position is precarious, so that he may not attack.’³¹⁷

and he suggests concealing the best horsemen to fall upon the enemy when they least expect it:

If, moreover, he can secretly leave behind him four or five of the best horses and men in each division, they will be at a great advantage in falling on the enemy as he is turning to renew the charge.³¹⁸

Xenophon again made reference to similar tactics:

[17] Should it happen at any time that the cavalry forces engaged are about equal, I think it would be a good plan to split each regiment into two divisions, putting one under the command of the colonel, and the other under the best man available.

[18] The latter would follow in the rear of the colonel's division for a time; but presently, when the adversary is near, he would wheel on receiving the order and charge. This plan, I think, would make the blow delivered by the regiment more stunning and more difficult to parry.

³¹⁷ CC 2.3.

³¹⁸ CC 8.23-25.

[19] Both divisions should have an infantry contingent; and if the infantry, hidden away behind the cavalry, came out suddenly and went for the enemy, I think they would prove an important factor in making the victory more decisive; for I have noticed that a surprise cheers men up if it is pleasant, but stuns them if it is alarming.

[20] Anyone will recognise the truth of this who reflects that, however great their advantage in numbers, men are dazed when they fall into an ambushade, and that two hostile armies confronting each other are scared out of their wits for the first few days.³¹⁹

He described the end of the battle at Mantinea as follows:

Thus, then, he [Epaminondas] made his attack, and he was not disappointed of his hope; for by gaining the mastery at the point where he struck, he caused the entire army of his adversaries to flee. [25] When, however, he had himself fallen, those who were left proved unable to take full advantage thereafter even of the victory; but although the opposing phalanx had fled before them, their hoplites did not kill a single man or advance beyond the spot where the collision had taken place; and although the cavalry also had fled before them, their cavalry in like manner did not pursue and kill either horsemen or hoplites, but slipped back timorously, like beaten men, through the lines of the flying enemy. Furthermore, while the intermingled footmen and the peltasts, who had shared in the victory of the cavalry, did make their way like victors to the region of the enemy's left wing, most of them were there slain by the Athenians.³²⁰

³¹⁹ CC 8.17 – 20.

³²⁰ Hell 7.5.24 – 25.

Xenophon described here how the *hamippoi* and the cavalry were victorious and that the Athenians had to retreat en masse. But the Boeotian army failed to consolidate the victory because after Epaminondas had fallen, they did not manage to deploy their cavalry and *hamippoi* to their full advantage and were thus cut to ribbons by the Athenians. This was a sign for Xenophon that the Athenians could in fact defeat the Thebans with Epaminondas now out of the picture. Thebes had been posing no real threat at this stage, as he concluded in his *Hellenica*:

neither was found to be any better off, as regards either additional territory, or city, or sway, than before the battle took place; but there was even more confusion and disorder in Greece after the battle than before.³²¹

After all these references in the works of Xenophon to Epaminondas, he would appear to have been the model for *Cavalry Commander*. This would also seem plausible given that Epaminondas after Agesilaus was the first to actually employ cavalry tactics on the battlefield. Xenophon wrote books about everyone he admired in military history, for example Hiero, Cyrus, Agesilaus and, it would appear, Epaminondas too. All books were meant as doctrines and though he preferred not to mention Epaminondas by name, he does express his admiration for him in that last chapter of the *Hellenica*.³²²

It is nevertheless noteworthy that Xenophon ascribes certain points on cavalry tactics and training to Agesilaus, while ascribing other salient points to Cyrus. He even includes the exact same passage in the *Cavalry Commander* and in his

³²¹ Hell 7.5.27; also in Xenophon, *Poroi* 5.8. ‘And now owing to the confusion prevalent in Greece, an opportunity, I think, has fallen to the state to win back the Greeks’.

³²² Hell 7.5.21.

account of the life of Agesilaus, and there are several parallel passages to be found in all his works. He has clearly chosen these two as his prime examples. Perhaps he learned from his Persian friends how they trained and prepared their cavalry and learned other things from Agesilaus. Xenophon and Agesilaus certainly shared their hatred of Thebes and were not prone to give in to the Boeotians.

It is not clear to me however whether the Spartan army actually deployed the cavalry in front of the infantry as Xenophon has described. At times he seems to be ascribing the creation of the *hamippoi* to Agesilaus, but that could not be the case because in 419 BC, the *hamippoi* had already been fielded against the Boeotians in the Peloponnesos, according to Thucydides.

As we have seen above, the Spartans themselves claimed that Epaminondas learned his tactics from Agesilaus following a battle which Agesilaus had fought in Boeotia, a matter which Xenophon does not in fact refer to in *Hellenica*. This might have to do with Xenophon's own particular perspective.

Agesilaus probably brought the tactics of the Thebans to Xenophon's attention. He had gained a lot of experience following his encounters with the Thebans on the battlefield. He had fought at Mantinea and was a personal friend of Xenophon. In his works, Xenophon makes little reference to the Boeotian tactics, preferring to ascribe these tactics to Agesilaus or the Spartans, though not with complete success. In his *Hellenica*, he completely ignores the Battle at Tegyra and makes every effort to cite Sparta as the precursor of cavalry attacks and the Thebans as their imitators.

It is clear that Xenophon sensed his opportunity with the confusion that reigned in Greece following the battle at Mantinea. In the following excerpt from his

Ways and Means, we find exactly the same conclusion that he arrived at in *Hellenica*:

‘now, owing to the confusion prevalent in Greece, an opportunity has fallen to the state to win back the Greeks without trouble, without danger and without expense.’³²³

The *Hellenica* was written in any event after the Battle at Mantinea. In both books he called on Athens to take action to regain control over Greece:

And now, owing to the confusion prevalent in Greece, an opportunity, I think, has fallen to the state to win back the Greeks without trouble, without danger, and without expense. For she has it in her power to try to reconcile the warring states, she has it in her power to compose the factions contending in their midst. [9] And were it apparent that you are striving to make the Delphic shrine independent, as it used to be, not by joining in war, but by sending embassies up and down Greece, I for my part should not be in the least surprised if you found the Greeks all of one mind, banded together by oath and united in alliance against any that attempted to seize the shrine in the event of the Phocians abandoning it. [10] Were you to show also that you are striving for peace in every land and on every sea, I do think that, next to the safety of their own country, all men would put the safety of Athens first in their prayers. [11]

If, on the other hand, any one supposes that financially war is more profitable to the state than peace, I really do not know how the truth of this can be tested better than by considering once more what has been

³²³ Xenophon, *Poroi* 5.8.

the experience of our state in the past. [12] He will find that in old days a very great amount of money was paid into the treasury in time of peace, and that the whole of it was spent in time of war; he will conclude on consideration that in our own time the effect of the late war on our revenues was that many of them ceased, while those that came in were exhausted by the multitude of expenses; whereas the cessation of war by sea has been followed by a rise in the revenues, and has allowed the citizens to devote them to any purpose they choose. [13]

But some one may ask me, Do you mean to say that, even if she is wronged, the state should remain at peace with the offender? No, certainly not; but I do say that our vengeance would follow far more swiftly on our enemies if we provoked nobody by wrong-doing; for then they would look in vain for an ally. 6.

Well now, surely, if none of these proposals is impossible or even difficult, if by carrying them into effect we shall be regarded with more affection by the Greeks, shall live in greater security, and be more glorious; if the people will be maintained in comfort and the rich no more burdened with the expenses of war; if with a large surplus in hand we shall celebrate our festivals with even more splendour than at present, shall restore the temples, and repair the walls and docks, and shall give back to priests, councillors, magistrates, knights their ancient privileges; surely, I say, our proper course is to proceed with this scheme forthwith, that already in our generation we may come to see our city secure and prosperous. [2]

Furthermore, if you decide to go forward with the plan, I should advise you to send to Dodona and Delphi, and inquire of the gods whether such a design is fraught with weal for the state both now and in days to come. [3] And should they consent to it, then I would say that we ought to ask them further, which of the gods we must propitiate in order that we may prosper in our handiwork. Then, when we have offered an acceptable

sacrifice to the gods named in their reply, it behoves us to begin the work. For with heaven to help us in what we do, it is likely that our undertakings will go forward continually to the greater weal of the state.³²⁴

Some passages from *Ways and Means* are exactly the same as in *Cavalry Commander*. Xenophon himself clearly states that *Ways and Means* was written in the period after Hegesileos, which is the Ionian variant of the Doric name of Agesilaus³²⁵ and after ‘the late war’.³²⁶

This would mean that the *Cavalry Commander* was also authored after the Battle at Mantinea. The date given to Xenophon’s *Cavalry Commander* tends to be around 365 BC³²⁷ but I think that the actual date was after 362 BC, because of all these repeated references to the power vacuum which had arisen after the Battle at Mantinea in both *Cavalry Commander*, *Ways and Means* and *On Horsemanship*.

If we wish to see these works as ‘mirrors of princes’ as they are sometimes called, then it is more than likely that it was Xenophon’s intention to write the passages on horsemanship and cavalry as political and military advice. His *Cavalry Commander* and *On Horsemanship* were clearly meant to be read in that way by the Athenians. Various pronouncements of his regarding the

³²⁴ Xenophon, *Poroi* 5.8 – 6.3

³²⁵ Xenophon, *Poroi* 3.7

³²⁶ Xenophon, *Poroi* 4.40. In a footnote on page 219 of the Loeb edition of Xenophon’s *Scripta Minora* it is stated that this would be an allusion to the ‘War of the Allies’ lasting from 357 to 355 BC. But I think that he meant the recent war with Thebes for two reasons. The first one being his reference to the confused state Greece was in, which he clearly stated as a consequence of the Battle at Mantinea in 362 BC in *Hellenika*; the second one being that Xenophon died around 355 BC and probably never saw the end of the ‘War of the Allies’ himself.

³²⁷ Loeb, *Xenophon Scripta Minora*; Introduction on Xenophon p xxviii.

preparations for war and the training of the cavalry in particular, as stated earlier, are to be found not only in his specific manuals but also in *Ways and Means* and in *Economics* and *Memorabilia*.

It is my contention, based on salient aspects of cavalry tactics employed by Epaminondas at Mantinea, that the *Cavalry Commander* in fact is a political and military advice particularly where cavalry matters are concerned and that Xenophon penned this treatise in a manner that would enable the Athenians to make use of it to improve their own cavalry. In all of his books, he refers to Boeotia as ‘the offender’, which of course is true given that Sparta and Athens were allies at that time.

Do you mean to say that, even if she is wronged, the state should remain at peace with the offender?³²⁸

To this end, he could not mention Epaminondas, though he has referred to significant historical figures of the time such as Agesilaus, Cyrus and Socrates. His own voice was quite clear in *Ways and Means*, where he provided his own view of Athens and was forthright in his recommendations. Accordingly, also the references made to Epaminondas and his tactics in the battles at Tegyra, Leuctra and Mantinea seem to have been incorporated in the *Cavalry Commander*. In order to be able to fight the Boeotian cavalry in the future, he wanted the Athenians to improve their horsemanship and to embrace the Boeotian way of deploying cavalry and infantry. To achieve this goal, he wrote his *On Horsemanship* and *On The Cavalry Commander*.

³²⁸ Xenophon, *Poroi* 5.13.

3.7. Conclusions on Greek cavalry warfare

We have seen that the Greek cavalry was used as a border patrol in the first instance and for purposes of conveying messages, keeping an eye on the enemy, foraging and pursuit. The Greek *poleis* had created *naucraries*, which called for a small number of riders and a relatively low or limited level of horsemanship.

The exception to this is Thessaly. Where necessary, a city such as Athens could form an alliance with Thessaly and in so doing, secure access to a large number of trained riders capable of fighting other cavalry or of mounting a surprise attack against the infantry. This cavalry however did not want to engage in battle against hoplites in battle formation.

Athens and Sparta were well aware of their low level of horsemanship on the battlefield and in the Persian War, sought to draw on Sicily, which had an impressive cavalry. However this did not happen due to problems with Carthage and difficult internal Greek relations.

The Athenian cavalry was still *naucrarian* at the time of the Persian War, and therefore had no tasks on the battlefield as they lacked the necessary horsemanship. The Thessalian and Boeotian cavalry opted to side with the Persians. Not a strange choice, given that the style of horsemanship used by the Thessalians was similar to that of the Persians.

The Persian cavalry was a long-distance cavalry, accustomed to fighting with bow and arrow and unaccustomed to close combat. They were no match therefore against the Athenian and Spartan hoplites. The Thessalian and

Boeotian cavalry did manage to have some success against the Athenians and Spartans, but these were small victories. In long-range combat, it did not prove as necessary to refine tactics or for horses to receive optimum training, particularly when arrows were being fired from the horses at some distance.

After the Persian Wars, Athens saw an increase in its number of riders. According to Aristoteles, the number was increased to 1,200 in the first 17 years after Salamis. During the period 479 – 431 BC, the number of riders remained at about 1,000. But it would appear that the Athenians and other Greeks still thoroughly underestimated the use of cavalry as a fighting force. There is some reference to skirmishes between riders in the first 15 years of the Peloponnesian War. These would appear to take the form of naucrarian assaults, with the coast being skimmed by ships and the occasional fight where riders and infantry were deployed in alternate fashion. It was the Boeotian cavalry which dominated the battlefield.

The old way of fighting would appear to have remained the norm. Riders were still being deployed as naucrary cavalry and shipped in as a small company in support of hoplites when the need arose. In fact, Athens made the classical error of deciding to increase the size of the cavalry without making provision for the requisite level of horsemanship.

During the Peloponnesian War, horse transport ships were used for the first time, though not for conveying large numbers of riders and horses, not even when they sailed to Sicily to wage war. At first, they were merely used for transporting riders, and not horses. This proved to be an enormous underestimation of the level of horsemanship that was required. The Athenians

consequently were no match for the Sicilian riders, except for on one occasion when they worked in unison with the infantry.

In Sicily, however, there was more to contend with than the mere underestimation on the part of the Athenians. Unlike the Persian and Thessalian cavalry, the Sicilians carried out attacks on closed hoplite lines, based on experience from Iberia, the Celtiberians and the North African Carthaginians. The Sicilians had their own unique methods of attacking hoplites, riding to and fro into them and simultaneously throwing spears, a manner of combat used also by the Numidian cavalry and described by Strabo as Iberian. This indeed was a departure from the traditional style of horsemanship and in 413 BC, the Athenians were forced to return home, having achieved nothing.

After the Peloponnesian Wars, we begin to see more and more use of riders in combat. Cavalry was now being fielded more frequently as units fighting other cavalry and no longer served merely as message bearers and foragers. The Greek cavalry therefore was obliged to continue developing its horsemanship, since the mode of combat had changed from border patrols to expansion-wars. We see an increase in the number of cavalry battles, with war now being waged more frequently on the mainland rather than on sea.

The Spartan Agesilaus, according to Xenophon, was the first Greek who recruited his cavalry from people who were horse-minded and who preferred to fight on horses. He had come to this conclusion during his campaign in Asia Minor when during a confrontation with the Persian cavalry he discovered that his own cavalry was not good enough and that the weaponry used left much to be desired. According to Xenophon, Agesilaus now used his cavalry on the

battlefield as part of the tactics and intermingled his cavalry with the heavy infantry so as to increase the surprise effect.

The Theban general, Epaminondas, made use of *hamippoi* in the Battle at Tegyra in 375, Leuctra in 371 and at Mantinea in 362 BC, deploying them in a dense formation of a deepened phalanx in the middle of the battleground. He placed other cavalry along the flanks with the intention of cutting through the Spartan and Athenian army and then deployed the cavalry in an outflanking movement to close them in. The *hamippoi*, hoplites fighting with cavalry in a dense formation, represented an added value in tactical terms when used skilfully on the battlefield as cavalry did not want to fight hoplites in battle formation. Epaminondas may justifiably be regarded as the first general who made successful use of cavalry formations on the battlefield. He was capable of exploiting cavalry tactics in a manner that left the hoplites of Sparta and Athens at a total disadvantage.

Xenophon therefore wrote his treatise *On Horsemanship* to inform his fellow Athenians about his own experiences with horsemanship and wanted to confer the practices that he thought of as most useful to the Athenian cavalry. In this book he did not only use Boiotian, but also Persian and maybe even Celtiberian practices.

In his works, Xenophon dealt with many of the leading contemporary strategists (he devoted a book to each Agesilaus, Hieron and Cyrus), and he discussed the tactics of Epaminondas of Thebes, whom he held in awe, as I have explained above. The tactics employed by Epaminondas and the use of his cavalry inspired Xenophon to write his *Cavalry Commander*, though he did not want to

refer to Epaminondas by name. The book was intended after all to inspire Athenians to action and to adopt Boeotian tactics, which they were not eager to do.

Xenophon saw the opportunity for urging the Athenians to seize power once more in the power vacuum that arose after the Battle at Mantinea in 362 BC. He tried in many ways to show them that this was within their grasp. In *Ways and Means*, he set out a plan on how this might be achieved. One aspect of this concerned the revitalisation of the cavalry of Athens, once a mighty force in the 5th century. But they did not only need to revive the cavalry, they needed to adapt to changed battlefield conditions as well.

The cavalry had not fared well after the Oligarchy of the Thirty. The Athenian cavalry was not being well trained at this stage and was no longer proving to be much of a force on the battlefield. In his *Cavalry Commander* and *On Horsemanship*, Xenophon set out to deal with these issues. He wanted to see the Athenians achieving hegemony once more.

It was not to be. Philip of Macedonia learned some of his tactics from Epaminondas and was fortunate to make use of these several years later, when he used his Macedonian phalanx and cavalry to fill the power vacuum that had arisen in Greece.

Chapter 4. Xenophon on Athenian Cavalry

4.1. Introduction

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Sparta and Athens were having difficulty keeping up with the developments in the area of warfare. Initially, after the Peloponnesian War, Sparta had the hegemony due to Agesilaus and his tactical use of the cavalry, as Xenophon saw it. But this hegemony soon began to wane, as did Spartan horsemanship. The Athenian cavalry was not as good on the battlefield as it may have been before either. As a result of this, Athens and Sparta were defeated by Thebes at Leuctra in 371 BC and Mantinea in 362 BC.

Xenophon advised Athens to put more emphasis on the use of cavalry:

‘It is clear, however, that no troops will be able to inflict loss on a much stronger army with impunity, unless they are so superior in the practical application of horsemanship to war that they show like experts contending with amateurs.’³²⁹

Xenophon recognised that despite its best intentions, Athens could not for some reason get to grips with this combat unit:

‘If one took the same pains with our cavalry, they too would greatly excel others in arms and horses and discipline and readiness to face the enemy, if they thought that they would win glory and honour by it?’³³⁰

³²⁹ CC. 8.1.

³³⁰ Ec 9.3.14.

He wrote two manuals on this subject, his first being *On Horsemanship* and the second *On the Cavalry Commander*. These books cannot be separated. As he himself explains at the end of *On Horsemanship*:

‘These notes, instructions and exercises which we have here set down are intended only for the private person. What it belongs to a cavalry leader to know and to do has been set forth in another book.’³³¹

4.2. Xenophon on the current Athenian situation

Various recommendations from Xenophon come across as ad hoc measures and arguments for the Athenians to improve their current situation. Xenophon for example proposes a short-term plan for strengthening the Athenian cavalry by having the *metoikoi* admitted to cavalry service, preferably *metoikoi* who had a bitter hatred towards the enemy, Thebes.

Xenophon believed that the funding for the horses of these *metoikoi* could be secured from the money citizens would be willing to pay if they didn’t have to serve in the cavalry themselves. In his view, even citizens in active service would be happy to pay.³³² This meant that the *Hippeis* would pay for the horses of these cavalymen, but would not be part of the cavalry themselves. Xenophon put the desired number of resident aliens in the Athenian cavalry at 200 out of 1,000.³³³ He wrote:

‘If, moreover, we granted the resident aliens the right to serve in the cavalry and various other privileges which it is proper to grant them, I think

³³¹ PH 12.14.

³³² CC 9.4-6 and *Poroi* 2.5.

³³³ CC 9.3 – 6. Also in Lys. 15.14. See Bugh (1988) 70.

that we should find their loyalty increase and at the same time should add to the strength and greatness of the state.’³³⁴

Xenophon also advised on a change of horsemanship which consequently would require rigorous training for the cavalry. There were a number of problems, however. Xenophon was writing at a time when the Athenian cavalry lacked the status it had in the 5th century, when it was a focal point on the agenda of Athenian leaders and a showpiece, as evidenced by the Parthenon frieze and by his own writing:

‘instruction and practice in horsemanship have died out because there are no occasions on which they may give an exhibition and win distinction for skill’.³³⁵

In Athens, the cavalry was regarded as a safer unit than the infantry, a worthwhile option for people who were not keen on warfare.³³⁶ Lysias even alludes to cowardice where people show a preference for serving in the cavalry rather than in the infantry.³³⁷ Cavalrymen were sometimes berated by their own infantry because they had hardly fought in a battle or had come out of it unscathed. Remaining on one’s horse or riding off when the infantry was in trouble was regarded as cowardice. A comic resonance of this is to be found in the play *Hippeis* by Aristophanes, where a slave called Nicias offers a solution to a difficult situation by stating ‘let us bolt at top speed’.³³⁸

The following passage about the Spartan cavalry seems to indicate that it was not in optimal shape, as was the Athenian one:

³³⁴ Xenophon, *Poroi* 2.5; he expresses the same idea at the end of CC 9.4 – 6.

³³⁵ Cyr 8.8.13.

³³⁶ Lysias 15.13.

³³⁷ Lysias 14.7.

³³⁸ Aristophanes, *Hippeis* 25.

‘Now the cavalry of the Thebans was in good training as a result of the war with the Orchomenians and the war with the Thespians, while the cavalry of the Lacedaemonians was exceedingly poor at that time. For the richest men kept the horses, and it was only when the ban was called out that the appointed trooper presented himself; then he would get his horse and such arms as were given him, and take the field on the moment's notice. As for the men, on the other hand, it was those who were least strong of body and least ambitious who were mounted on the horses.’³³⁹

It was necessary to inspire the Athenians in ways that were of a financial rather than a military nature, and based on a competitive spirit, as Xenophon realised. Since the Athenians were not inclined by nature to put military matters above their business interests, the Athenian cavalry was not trained on a regular basis. Not all cavalrymen trained or fed their horses well, and they only exercised and practised when they were compelled to do so.³⁴⁰ Xenophon remarked:

‘it is perhaps too much trouble to have them out frequently when there is no war going on (...) it is useful to remind them that the state supports an expenditure of nearly forty talents a year in order that she may not have to look about for cavalry in the event of war, but may have it ready for immediate use. For with this thought in their minds the men are likely to take more pains with their horsemanship, so that when war breaks out they may not have to fight untrained for the state, for glory and for life.’³⁴¹

³³⁹ Hell 6.4.10 – 11.

³⁴⁰ CC 1.13 – 14.

³⁴¹ CC 1.18.

Athens paid an annual sum to maintain the cavalry and in order to have the cavalry ready on demand.³⁴² However, cavalrymen were not motivated to train themselves regularly, as we have seen. Xenophon put this in more explicit terms:

‘It is clear, however, that no troops will be able to inflict loss on a much stronger army with impunity, unless they are so superior in the practical application of horsemanship to war that they show like experts contending with amateurs. This superiority can be attained first and foremost if your marauding bands are so thoroughly drilled in riding that they can stand the hard work of a campaign. For both horses and men that are carelessly trained in this respect will naturally be like women struggling with men.’³⁴³

Xenophon remarked that the city of Athens had failed to acknowledge the importance of military training:

‘military training is not publicly recognised by the state’.³⁴⁴

A regiment entering into combat against cavalry and hoplites would require rigorous training, as shown earlier. The horses had to be trained to react to the lightest aids and be capable of fighting together as a united force. The riders had to keep up their training and be prepared to fight while mounted. If the training was insufficient, it would render the cavalry relatively ineffective. As Xenophon observed about untrained charioteers:

³⁴² CC 1.19.

³⁴³ CC 8.1 – 2.

³⁴⁴ Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.12.5.

‘Such untrained men do indeed charge, but before they penetrate the enemy’s lines some of them are unintentionally thrown out, some of them jump out on purpose and so the teams without drivers often create more havoc on their own side than on the enemy’s’³⁴⁵

When we read *cavalry* instead of *chariotry* here, this remark could also apply equally to the Athenian or other Greek cavalry.

Xenophon wanted to engage the Athenian spirit by promoting the use of competitions. Athenian citizens were very keen on competitions and liked to excel. Both of the following passages are remarkably similar in this respect:

‘but at all events as to practice in the various warlike exercises, it seems to me, father, that by announcing contests in each one and offering prizes you would secure practice in them, so that you would have everything prepared for use, whenever you might need it. ‘quite right, my son,’ said he, ‘for if you do that you may be sure that you will see your companies performing their proper parts like trained sets of dancers’

and this when spring was just coming on, he gathered his whole army at Ephesos, and desiring to train the army, he offered prizes both to the heavy-armed divisions, for the division which should be in the best physical condition, and to the cavalry divisions, for which should show the best horsemanship (...) There upon one might have seen all the gymnasia full of men exercising, the hippodrome full of riders.’³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ Cyr 8.8.25.

³⁴⁶ Cyr 1.6.18 and Hell 3.4.16 – 19: ‘and this when spring was just coming on, he gathered his whole army at Ephesos, and desiring to train the army, he offered prizes both to the heavy-armed divisions, for the division which should be in the best physical condition, and to the cavalry divisions, for which should show the best horsemanship (...) There upon one might have seen all the gymnasia full of men exercising, the hippodrome full of riders.’

Xenophon made reference to several occasions, mainly religious festivals, during which the cavalry would parade in battle formation for the people's benefit: 'the processions during the festivals (...) [and] the reviews in the Academy, in the Lyceum, at Phalerum, and in the Hippodrome.'³⁴⁷

He described the cavalry manoeuvres as follows:

As for the processions, I think they would be most acceptable both to the gods and to the spectators if they included a gala ride in the market place. The starting point would be the Herms; and the cavalry would ride round saluting the gods at their shrines and statues. So at the Great Dionysia the dance of the choruses forms part of the homage offered to the Twelve and to other gods.

When the circuit is completed and the cavalcade is again near the Herms, the next thing to do, I think, is to gallop at top speed by regiments as far as the Eleusinium. will add a word on the position in which the lances should be held to prevent crossing. Every man should point his lance between his horse's ears, if the weapons are to look fearsome, stand out distinctly, and at the same time to convey the impression of numbers.

The gallop finished and the goal reached, the right plan is to ride back to the temples by the same route, but at a slow pace: thus every effect that can be obtained from a horse with a man on his back will be included in the display, to the satisfaction of gods and men alike. (...)

During the parade at the Lyceum, before the javelin-throwing, the right way is to ride in two divisions in line of battle, each division consisting of five regiments with its commander at the head and the colonels; and the line should be so extended that the whole breadth of the course will be covered. As soon as they reach the highest point looking down on the

³⁴⁷ CC 3.1.

Theatre opposite, I think it would clearly be useful if you displayed your men's ability to gallop downhill in fairly large companies. (...)

The formation that would add most to the beauty of the exercises at the inspections has already been explained. Provided his horse is strong enough, the leader should ride round with the file that is on the outside every time. He will be galloping all the time himself, and the file whose turn it is to be on the outside with him will also be galloping. Thus the eyes of the Council will always be on the galloping file, and the horses will get a breathing space, resting by turns.

When the Hippodrome is the scene of the display, the right plan would be that the men should first be drawn up on a front broad enough to fill the Hippodrome with horses and drive out the people standing there.

In the sham fight when the regiments pursue and fly from one another at the gallop in two squadrons of five regiments, each side led by its commander, the regiments should ride through one another. How formidable they will look when they charge front to front; how imposing when, after sweeping across the Hippodrome, they stand facing one another again; how splendid, when the trumpet sounds and they charge once more at a quicker pace! After the halt, the trumpet should sound once more, and they should charge yet a third time at top speed; and when they have crossed, they should all range themselves in battle line preparatory to being dismissed, and ride up to the Council, just as you are accustomed to do.³⁴⁸

This corresponds with Xenophon's view that cavalrymen should parade themselves and their horses in public, thus demonstrating that their horses were well-trained and capable of participating in combat on the battlefield. As we

³⁴⁸ CC 3.2 – 14.

have seen, parades represent more than just showing off. Contests and races would also prove effective in canalising competition and in forcing the participants to train their horses well. It would help to establish a given level of horsemanship without having to go to war to train the men. To quote Xenophon:

“[26] And if you could offer prizes to the regiments for skill in all the feats that the public expects the cavalry to perform at the spectacles, I think this would appeal strongly to the spirit of emulation in every Athenian. For evidence of this I may refer to the choruses, in which many labours and heavy expenses are the price paid for trifling rewards. Only you must find judges whose suffrage will shed lustre on a victory.”³⁴⁹

It would provide a means for maintaining and probably even improving the overall performance of the cavalry. Shows and competitions may also have been useful for practising battle and parade manoeuvres and exercises during times of peace. Referring to the Spartan infantry, Lazenby remarks that parade ground manoeuvres and shows improved morale and battle potential.³⁵⁰ Xenophon advised the use of performances to motivate officers: at these shows they should at least be able to throw the javelin, and avoid falling off; to achieve this, they would need plenty of exercise. He is probably correct in observing that ‘this (these shows) would appeal strongly to the spirit of emulation in every Athenian.’³⁵¹

As Xenophon observed:

³⁴⁹ CC 1.26.

³⁵⁰ Lazenby (1985) 27.

³⁵¹ CC 1.25 – 26.

‘they will welcome the opportunity of showing off their skill: but you must see that they are not short of practice, or the enemy will compel them to do it against their will.’³⁵²

4.3. Leadership

Another problem that Xenophon recognised had to do with the Athenian democracy. Xenophon attributed the degeneration of the cavalry to inexperienced cavalry commanders who lacked horsemanship and good leadership qualities.³⁵³ Presumably a large number of *Hippeis* in the cavalry traditionally had an equestrian background and were experienced horsemen. Nonetheless, from the 5th century onwards, a *hipparch* was usually not chosen from their number but tended to be a political appointee.

Writing on the Greek cavalry, Polybius stated that some hipparchs treated the office as a stepping stone to that of *strategos* and as a result would not step up to their task as a leader. They would canvass the soldiers to secure their future support. These men, he argued, do mischief to the cavalry:

For, as for most of the others who are appointed to this office, some of them owing to their own incapacity in horse exercise do not even dare to give any proper orders to the men they have under them, while others who treat this office as a step to that of strategus, canvass the soldiers and secure their future support, never rebuking a man who deserves it, which is the way to safeguard public interests, but screening all faults and by conferring a small favour doing infinite harm to those who trust them. And

³⁵² CC 3.8.

³⁵³ He writes the same about the infantry in *Memorabilia* 4.5.19 and 21. Aristotle notes similar facts on the Athenian army in *Ath. Const.* 26.

if at any time some commanders are personally efficient and are also anxious to keep their hands off public money, they manage by their unhappy ambition to do more harm to the infantry than the negligent ones, and they do still more mischief to the cavalry.’³⁵⁴

Cleon is a good example of this. He was said to ‘have treated the horsemen badly’ and he was called by Aristophanes a ‘taraxippostraton’ in his *Knights*.³⁵⁵ Cleon was caught accepting a bribe and apparently the ‘thousand good and noble young horsemen of Athens hated and attacked one outside their number’.³⁵⁶

Many *Hippeis* were promoted to other military positions after only a short period in the cavalry. For example, Philoktemon became a *trierarch* after just a few years of cavalry service. Shaefer believes that cavalrymen regularly quit the cavalry force because they became too old for service.³⁵⁷ I would like to argue that one of the main reasons why these cavalrymen quitted was because they had found someone else to take their place. As we have seen before, many cavalrymen were quite happy to leave the cavalry. Another reason why these cavalrymen were relatively young when leaving had to do with the fact that they were in the cavalry to make a political or military career for themselves.

In this context, Aristotle observes:

‘After this revolution the administration of the state became more and more lax, in consequence of the eager rivalry of candidates for popular favour. During this period the moderate party, as it happened, had no real chief,

³⁵⁴ Polybius 10.22.8 – 10.

³⁵⁵ Aristophanes, *Hippeis* 247.

³⁵⁶ *Hippeis* 225-6; 242-54; Bugh (1988) 107 – 114.

³⁵⁷ Schaefer (2001) 24.

their leader being Cimon son of Miltiades, who was a comparatively young man, and had been late in entering public life; and at the same time the general populace suffered great losses by war. The soldiers for active service were selected at that time from the roll of citizens, and as the generals were men of no military experience, who owed their position solely to their family standing, it continually happened that some two or three thousand of the troops perished on an expedition; and in this way the best men alike of the lower and the upper classes were exhausted.³⁵⁸

In Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Nicomachides regards it as 'typical of the Athenians' to choose generals that are inexperienced and not interested in warfare, but only in career- and 'money-making':

"Isn't it like the Athenians?" replied he [Nikomachides]; "they haven't chosen me after all the hard work I have done, since I was called up, in the command of company or regiment, though I have been so often wounded in action" (and here he uncovered and showed his scars); "yet they have chosen Antisthenes, who has never served in a marching regiment nor distinguished himself in the cavalry and understands nothing but money-making."³⁵⁹

It is evident from *Cavalry Commander* that the *Hipparch* was dependent on the Council for advising the cavalry. The *Hipparch* could even be restricted in his tasks if he did not have the right spokesmen in the *Boule*. The Council could even work against the *Hipparch*.³⁶⁰ The efficiency of the Athenian cavalry thus

³⁵⁸ Ath. Const. 26

³⁵⁹ Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.4.1.

³⁶⁰ CC 1.8.

depended for a large part on the cavalry commander and his social network. Or, as Xenophon writes:

I am aware that the cavalry has exhibited other novel feats of skill in days when the cavalry commanders had sufficient influence to get their wishes carried out.³⁶¹

And there was another problem: because of their democratic system the Athenians were not inclined to accept each other's leadership, and the Boule could be obstructive at times, according to Xenophon. It was more a question of who you knew rather than 'knowing your trade'. The many changes in the leadership of the state made it impossible to establish a 'standing army', which meant that people could not be trained in basic skills and were lacking a 'hippic type of mentality'.

Xenophon clearly wrote his books on cavalry and horse training for the Athenian public, who in his view still needed to be convinced of the benefits of training the cavalry. He wrote about the importance of discipline and the obeying of orders as a prerequisite for a properly functioning cavalry.³⁶²

This ran contrary to the Athenian character; as we have seen, the Athenians did not easily accept peer leadership and had become accustomed to treating every authority with suspicion. Xenophon was aware of this too and for this reason he made further reference to 'the spirit of emulation' present in every Athenian, when he referred to the juries in the song contests.³⁶³

³⁶¹ CC 3.5.

³⁶² CC 1.24.

³⁶³ CC 1.26.

The lack of leadership in the Athenian cavalry may have been due to an Athenian trait, which in Polybius' view made it almost impossible to govern Athens. Polybius observes:

For the Athenian populace always more or less resembles a ship without a commander. In such a ship when fear of the billows or the danger of a storm induces the mariners to be sensible and attend to the orders of the skipper, they do their duty admirably. But when they grow over-confident and begin to entertain contempt for their superiors and to quarrel with each other, as they are no longer all of the same way of thinking, then with some of them determined to continue the voyage, and others putting pressure on the skipper to anchor, with some letting out the sheets and others preventing them and ordering the sails to be taken in, not only does the spectacle strike anyone who watches it as disgraceful owing to their disagreement and contention, but the position of affairs is a source of actual danger to the rest of those on board; so that often after escaping from the perils of the widest seas and fiercest storms they are shipwrecked in harbour and when close to the shore.³⁶⁴

If such politicians were inexperienced in the art of warfare and specifically in the art of cavalry warfare, they would have had difficulty in exerting their authority.

Xenophon attached great importance to this, and in his *Memorabilia* he explains how, in the words of Socrates, an average candidate seeking a hipparch position should proceed in order to be appointed. This might be tantamount to saying

³⁶⁴ Polybius 6.43.3 – 7.

that a person put in charge by the Athenians did not necessarily know what he was doing:

“Come then, tell us first how you propose to improve the horses.”

“Oh, but I don't think that is my business. Every man must look after his own horse.”

“Then if some of your men appear on parade with their horses ailing or suffering from bad feet or sore legs, others with underfed animals that can't go the pace, others with restive brutes that won't keep in line, others with such bad kickers that it is impossible to line them up at all, what will you be able to make of your cavalry? How will you be able to do the state any good with a command like that?”

“I am much obliged to you,” he replied, “and I will try to look after the horses carefully.”

“Won't you also try to improve the men?” said Socrates.

“I will.”

“Then will you first train them to mount better?”

“Oh yes, I must, so that if anyone is thrown he may have a better chance of saving himself.”

“Further, when there is some danger before you, will you order them to draw the enemy into the sandy ground where your manoeuvres are held, or will you try to carry out your training in the kind of country that the enemy occupy?”

“Oh yes, that is the better way.”

“And again, will you pay much attention to bringing down as many of the enemy as possible without dismounting?”

“Oh yes, that too is the better way.”

“Have you thought of fostering a keen spirit among the men and hatred of the enemy, so as to make them more gallant in action?”

“Well, at any rate, I will try to do so now.”

“And have you considered how to make the men obey you? Because without that horses and men, however good and gallant, are of no use.”

“True, but what is the best way of encouraging them to obey, Socrates?”

“Well, I suppose you know that under all conditions human beings are most willing to obey those whom they believe to be the best. Thus in sickness they most readily obey the doctor, on board ship the pilot, on a farm the farmer, whom they think to be most skilled in his business.”

“Yes, certainly.”

“Then it is likely that in horsemanship too, one who clearly knows best what ought to be done will most easily gain the obedience of the others.”

“If then, Socrates, I am plainly the best horseman among them, will that suffice to gain their obedience?”

“Yes, if you also show them that it will be safer and more honourable for them to obey you.”³⁶⁵

It is noteworthy, how much emphasis Xenophon puts on ‘bringing down the enemy while being mounted’. The Athenian cavalry needed to learn how to fight hoplites while being mounted. In the passage above, Xenophon expresses views on leadership in the cavalry, which he has expressed also in the *Cavalry Commander*:

“but only a good cavalry commander can find men who will show intelligence, reliability and courage in wheeling to charge the enemy. [22] For the commander must be capable both by his words and action of making the men under him realize that it is good to obey, to back up their leader, and to charge home; of firing them with a desire to win commendation; and of enabling them to carry out their intentions with persistence.”³⁶⁶

A capable commander stands a good chance of succeeding, as Plutarch knew or found in his sources:

‘Philopoemen, however, did not yield or give way to them. He went round to the different cities and roused the spirit of ambition in each young man individually, punished those who needed compulsion, introduced drills, parades, and competitive contests in places where there would be large bodies of spectators and thus in a short time inspired them all with an astonishing vigour and zeal, and, what is of the greatest importance in tactics, rendered them agile and swift in wheeling and deploying by

³⁶⁵ Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.3 – 10.

³⁶⁶ CC 8.21.

squadrons, and in wheeling and turning by single trooper, making the dexterity shown by the whole mass in its evolutions to be like that of a single person moved by an impulse from within.³⁶⁷

Xenophon writes that a cavalry commander should encourage his officers and should at all times have the confidence of his men by showing them that he is a capable leader. He should have his riders exercise on all kinds of terrain in order to practice a firm seat and he should organise sham fights on a regular basis.³⁶⁸ Acquiring a high level of horsemanship is therefore even more important for a commander than for a regular horseman.

4.4. Aristocracy and the cavalry

It took a lot of time and money to train and to maintain a horse, particularly if this was not done well between times of war. For this reason, tournaments and parades were traditionally important for the cavalry, as it helped to maintain and perhaps improve its level of expertise. Keeping a horse may have been cheaper if people could do it themselves but it was a time-consuming exercise and in this period, the average working man needed his time to earn money. Therefore if he had no estate on which to keep his horse, the horse had to be stabled elsewhere at considerable expense and had to be fed on grain which was more expensive than grass.

The aristocracy therefore became the designated class for maintaining horses because they had the land. When that changed, however, the less fortunate members of the economic class of the *hippeis*, i.e. those with no land, more

³⁶⁷ Plutarchus, *Philopoimen* 7.3 – 5.

³⁶⁸ CC 1.18-20.

than likely had to have their horses stabled at some expense with people who had land. I suspect that most of them would have regarded this as a waste of money, particularly when the horse had to be trained by others. After all one cannot leave a horse idle for months on end and then suddenly recommence training:

War was raging, so the cavalryman was able to feed his horse with barley and give him good hay to eat, treating the horse as his noble companion in battle. Then the war came to an end and a time of peace ensued. The soldier was no longer given wages by the state so his horse now had to work all the time carrying heavy logs down out of the woods into the city. In addition, his owner hired the horse out to other people to carry their loads as well. All the while, the horse had as his food only the worst sort of chaff, and the harness he wore on his back was no longer that of a warhorse. Some time later, the clash of battle resounded once again around the city walls, and the trumpet summoned every man to dust off his shield, sharpen his sword, and ready his horse. The horse's owner put the bridle back on his steed, but when he led the horse out to be mounted, the horse collapsed and fell to his knees, having lost all his former strength. 'Go join the infantry!' the horse told his owner. 'You have transferred me from the horse regiment to the donkeys; do you really think you can just change me back again?'³⁶⁹

So there has always been a link between the aristocracy (rural aristocracy) and horsemanship. There is a connection between aristocratic ideals and horsemanship. Traditionally, states other than Athens excelled in cavalry:

³⁶⁹ *The Soldier and his Horse* (nr 415) in *Aesop's Fables*. A new translation by Laura Gibbs. Oxford University Press (World's Classics): Oxford, 2002; Perry 320 (Babrius 76).

‘[Alexander] is also said to have recalled that Xenophon and his Ten Thousand, though they were not to be compared to themselves in number and other qualities, with no cavalry, Thessalian, Boeotian, Peloponnesian, Macedonian or Thracian, nor such other horse as they now had in their own ranks (...)’.³⁷⁰

In classical Athens, things were a bit different. The Athenian class of *Hippeis* consisted of men whose estates could produce 300 *medimnoi* of grain or who could keep horses. At the end of the 5th century, it was not even necessary for a *hippeus* to own land.³⁷¹ From Lysias we know that many hoplites and cavalrymen did not in fact own land.³⁷²

This originally aristocratic class of *Hippeis* or horsemen had become an economically defined class. The rural aristocracy and horses were no longer interlinked.³⁷³ In the 4th century, according to Aristotle, it was more probable that the main difference between the *pentakosiomedimnoi* and the *Hippeis* was that they could produce a certain amount of grain instead of keeping a horse.³⁷⁴ To an Athenian, the horse was a means of transport and status and it did not generate an economical return for its owner. But breeding and keeping horses could generate profit, if done with expertise: famous horse breeders could sell off their horses for a lot of money and people would import horses if they were

³⁷⁰ Arrianus, *Anabasis Alexandros* 2.7.8.

³⁷¹ Spence (1993) 181.

³⁷² Lysias 34.4.

³⁷³ Bugh (1988) 151-2: loss of those Athenian families bred in the tradition of horsemanship and cavalry service.

³⁷⁴ Ath. Const. 7.4.

better than home-bred stock.³⁷⁵ A breeder with little expertise would of course suffer losses.³⁷⁶

After the Oligarchy of the Thirty, the Athenian cavalry became associated with Spartan interests and preferences and for this reason was not regarded as a prized unit in which to serve. Originally, riders were selected by income categories. At the beginning of the 4th century, after the Oligarchy of the Thirty, a review took place to determine which *Hippeus* could serve in the *Hippeis*. They were scrutinized, not for their class, but for what merits they had done for the city of Athens.³⁷⁷

So in the end, the Athenian cavalry force no longer consisted exclusively of true *Hippeis*, rather it became an amalgam of the old elite *Hippeis* and people who shunned infantry duty and who probably were not very motivated to train their horses well. In all probability, some of the cavalymen were paid to serve by *Hippeis* who did not want to serve themselves and these men may well have been very patriotic and highly motivated.³⁷⁸ Perhaps these were ‘true’ horsemen who were not *Hippeis* by income. It is quite likely that with the enlargement of the cavalry by Pericles in the 5th century, men were permitted to the *Hippeis* class who did not belong to the old nobility but who were interested in serving in the cavalry. In his *Hipparchikos*, Xenophon writes (as does Aristotle) that the *Hippeis* had to be assessed on a regular basis to see if they qualified for the

³⁷⁵ Schaefer (2001) 18.

³⁷⁶ Ec 3.7.

³⁷⁷ Lysias 14 and 15. See also Lysias 26.8 (‘on the scrutiny of Evandros’) also Const. Ath. 49. Alcibiades did not pass the scrutiny on account of his oligarchic sympathies, even though he was an excellent horseman.

³⁷⁸ Lysias 15.14.

annual income due to *Hippeis*.³⁷⁹ This development in Athenian society may well have been aided by the *katastasis* and *sitos* grants, i.e. allowances paid to cavalrymen to buy a horse and fodder.³⁸⁰ Apparently, these new *Hippeis* could not always afford their horses.

It was not always clear who were and who were not serving in the cavalry³⁸¹ and some could even enter cavalry service without passing the usual scrutiny. Not every *hippeus* was serving in his city's cavalry unit.³⁸² In Lysias 15.14, the defendant pays 30 drachmae a person to two patriotic fellow countrymen, offering them the opportunity to serve in the cavalry instead of himself. In the 3rd century BC, another example shows that Greek cavalry did not always consist of the socio-economic class of *Hippeis*. On the Achaean cavalry, Plutarch writes as follows:

‘that they [the Achaeans] shirked most campaigns themselves, and sent others out in their places; (...) and that their commanders always overlooked these things because the knights had the greatest power and influence among the Achaeans and the chief voice in the assignment of rewards and punishments’.³⁸³

The Athenian cavalry in the meantime consisted no longer of the elite citizens but rather of foreigners, if we are to believe Xenophon:

³⁷⁹ A similar situation had developed in Sparta. The number of Spartiatae had diminished and other classes like *perioikoi*, *mothakes* and even *helotes* could serve in their army, according to Lazenby (1985) 17 – 24.

³⁸⁰ Bugh (1988) 75.

³⁸¹ Lysias 15.6.

³⁸² Bugh (1988) 24 – 27 and Spence (1993) 182.

³⁸³ Plutarchus, *Philopoimen* 7.

‘The state itself would gain if the citizens served in the ranks together, and no longer found themselves in the same company with Lydians, Phrygians, Syrians and barbarians of all sorts, of whom a large part of our alien population consists. In addition to the advantage of dispensing with the services of these men, it would be an ornament to the state that the Athenians should be thought to rely on themselves rather than on the help of foreigners in fighting their battles.’³⁸⁴

This may have had consequences for the aristocracy and its preferences for the cavalry. Particularly when the old aristocracy were often prohibited from serving in the cavalry after the Oligarchy of the Thirty because of their suspected pro-Spartan stance. But there was a side-effect. In a society where perhaps the horse was no longer regarded an aristocratic status symbol, the old aristocratic standards of horsemanship had become diluted, with training no longer being regarded as that important. This would have negative consequences for the cavalry, because the cavalrymen no longer served under people who prided themselves in their horsemanship but rather under people who wanted to further their career.³⁸⁵

Aristotle tells us that in the first 17 years after the Persian Wars, Athens had a cavalry of 1,200 men³⁸⁶ and that in the period after 460 BC, Athens became more democratic under Pericles. People were paid a salary at that time to serve in the cavalry and they got used to that.³⁸⁷ According to Aristotle, things

³⁸⁴ Xenophon, *Poroi* 2.3 – 4.

³⁸⁵ See also Bugh (1988) 143 – 150 on the decline of the Athenian cavalry; 129: ‘the restored democracy immediately attacked the financial foundations of the cavalry’.

³⁸⁶ Ath. Const. 24-25.

³⁸⁷ Ath. Const. 27.2.

worsened after Pericles and leadership came into the hands of men who were audacious and sought popularity.³⁸⁸

In his *Economics*, Xenophon described the life of a nobleman as it should be according to his own values: a landowner who conducts his business well and owns a horse which he trains on a daily basis to serve his country during wartime.³⁸⁹ Xenophon apparently wanted the old values of the equestrian nobility to be revived. He speaks of profit, honour and fame which accompany good horsemanship. It would appear that Xenophon wanted to apply his aristocratic values to the Athenian cavalry. Values which, as stated earlier, were probably more suited to an oligarchic, monarchical or tyrannical state rather than to a democracy. One might conclude consequently that in Xenophon's view, the cavalry would not necessarily benefit by a democratic system.³⁹⁰

4.5. Xenophon on training the Athenian cavalry

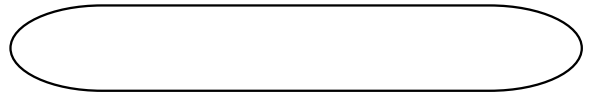
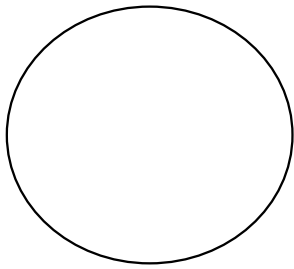
Xenophon wanted the Athenian cavalry to improve, not necessarily in numbers, but in skill. He recognised that mastering 'collection' was a prerequisite for the Athenian cavalry. In his work, he described a few horse training exercises and made reference to the following: the ring; the 'manage'; and the 'hippasia'. The last word indicates a location as well as a training programme.³⁹¹

³⁸⁸ Ath. Const. 28.4.

³⁸⁹ Ec 11.14-18.

³⁹⁰ See Bugh (1988) 119: 'The disaster of the Sicilian Expedition and the occupation of Decelia by the Spartans from 413 – 404 BC only confirmed to many upperclass Athenians that democracy was the cause of Athens' woes'.

³⁹¹ PH 7.19.



The 'ring' and the 'manage'

Xenophon speaks of galloping along the straight as fast as possible, then at the end, turning the horse as sharply as possible.

‘We recommend the manage rather than the complete ring, for thus the horse will turn more willingly when he has gone some distance in a straight course, and one can practise the career and the turn at the same time. It is necessary to collect him at the turns; for it is neither easy for the horse nor safe to turn short when going fast, especially if the ground is uneven or slippery. In collecting him the rider must slant the horse as little as possible with the bit, and slant his own body as little as possible; else he may be sure that a trifling cause will be enough to bring him and his horse down.

As soon as the horse faces the straight after turning, push him along at once. For of course, in war too, turns are made with a view to pursuit or retreat. It is well, therefore, to practise increasing the pace after turning. So soon as the horse appears to have been exercised enough, it is well to let him rest a certain time, and then suddenly to put him to his top speed again, of course away from, not towards, other horses, and to pull him up again in the midst of his career as short as possible, and then

to turn and start him again from the stand. For it is obvious that a time will come when it will be necessary to do one or the other.’³⁹²

The Greek text reads ‘strophein’.³⁹³ This means turning the horse with a rein or ‘neck reining’ as it is called today. The term ‘strophein’ is usually translated as ‘to wheel’, but I would like to suggest referring to this as ‘making a pirouette-turn’.

In Pollux’s *Onomastikon* we read:

‘One should make turns or half-voltes, in Greek καμπή, and pirouette-turns, called ὑποστροφή³⁹⁴ and στροφή. In these στρόφας one should not spur his horse, but rein it, which is also called ‘to collect’ (...). One should also not make the horse turn with one rein while sitting sideways, because in that case both could easily come to fall.’³⁹⁵

In the following passage, Xenophon speaks of ‘strophein’, by which he undoubtedly means making a pirouette-turn, in this context:

‘If at any time when an enemy’s camp lies in front there is a cavalry skirmish, and one side presses the pursuit right up to the enemy’s line of battle, but then retreats hastily to its own main body, it is well to know in that case that so long as you are by your friends, it is proper and safe to be among the first to *wheel* and make for the enemy at full speed; but

³⁹² PH 7.14 – 18; see also: CC 3.14: ‘To avoid being thrown the riders should throw the body back in charging, and collect their horses when wheeling, to keep them from falling. In the straight, however, they should gallop.’

³⁹³ PH 7.14 and 15.

³⁹⁴ Also ὑποστροφάει are the turns at high speed made at the στήλαι on the racetrack.

³⁹⁵ Pollux, *Onomastikon* 204.

when you come near the enemy to keep your horse well in hand. For in this way you have the best chance of injuring the enemy without coming to harm yourself.’³⁹⁶

These procedures were important to previously mentioned cavalry tactics such as the square formation, chase and flight, and the use of *hamippoi*, which were all advocated for by Xenophon as we have seen in the previous chapter. A prerequisite for these manoeuvres is mastering collection.³⁹⁷

Because he saw the benefits of mastering collection, Xenophon tried to convince the Athenians that collection is not only important for performance purposes, but that it is also desirable because it looks good, which would appeal to the Athenians who were more inclined to the arts and making a good appearance than to actual warfare.

Xenophon wanted the Athenians to buy a horse that has a strong body so that it will be capable of collection. The horse that is most suitable in this respect will have the characteristics referred to below:

But in case anyone wants to own a horse suitable for parade, with a high and showy action, such qualities are by no means to be found in every horse: but it is essential that he should have plenty of spirit and a strong body. [2] Many suppose that an animal that has supple legs will also be capable of rearing his body. That, however, is not the case: rather it is the horse with supple, short, strong loins that will be able to extend his hind-

³⁹⁶ PH 8.12.

³⁹⁷ Collection has been explained in Chapter 2.

legs well under the forelegs. By “loins” we do not mean the parts about the tail, but those between the flanks and haunches about the belly.³⁹⁸

To quote Xenophon on more characteristics of a horse that can be well collected:

‘His neck should not hang downwards from the chest like a boar's, but stand straight up to the crest, like a cock's; but it should be flexible at the bend; and the head should be bony, with a small cheek. Thus the neck will protect the rider, and the eye see what lies before the feet. Besides, a horse of such a mould will have least power of running away, be he never so high-spirited, for horses do not arch the neck and head, but stretch them out when they try to run away.

Xenophon was right: this type of horse is more capable and powerful in his galloping. This build, therefore, is typical for racehorses.³⁹⁹

You should notice, too, whether both jaws are soft or hard, or only one; for horses with unequal jaws are generally unequally sensitive in the mouth.

(...)The broader and shorter the loins, the more easily the horse lifts his fore quarters and the more easily he brings up his hind quarters.

(...) The haunches must be broad and fleshy, that they may be in right proportion to the flanks and chest, and if they are firm all over, they will be lighter for running and will make the horse speedier. If the gap that separates the hams under the tail is broad, he will also extend his hind legs well apart under his belly; and by doing that he will be more fiery and stronger when he

³⁹⁸ PH 8.12

³⁹⁹ See Appendix J for more explanation and photos.

throws himself on his haunches⁴⁰⁰ and when he is ridden, and will make the best of himself in all ways. One can infer this from the action of a man: for when he wants to lift anything from the ground, a man invariably tries to lift it with his legs apart rather than close together.

(...)

He who applies these tests to a colt's shape is sure, in my opinion, to get a beast with good feet, strong, muscular, of the right look and the right size. If some change as they grow, still we may confidently rely on these tests, for it is far commoner for an ugly colt to make a useful horse than for a colt like this to turn out ugly.⁴⁰¹

This must have made an impression on those Athenians who regarded the exterior image in the spirit of *imitatio* and *aemulatio* as important, though not so much in the military arena. Of course the most impressive collection is the one that is not forced:

[3] Now, if when he is planting his hind-legs under him you pull him up with the bit, he bends the hind-legs on the hocks and raises the fore-part of his body, so that anyone facing him can see the belly and the sheath. When he does that you must give him the bit that he may appear to the onlookers to be doing willingly the finest things that a horse can do. [4] Some, however, teach these accomplishments by striking him under the hocks with a rod, others by telling a man to run alongside and hit him with a stick under the gaskins.

[5] We, however, consider that the lesson is most satisfactory if, as we have repeatedly said, the rider invariably allows him relaxation when he has done something according to his wishes. [6] For what a horse does under

⁴⁰⁰ 'on the haunches' is a prerequisite for elevation and thus classical collection.

⁴⁰¹ PH 1.3-17.

constraint, as Simon says, he does without understanding, and with no more grace than a dancer would show if he was whipped and goaded. Under such treatment horse and man alike will do much more that is ugly than graceful. No, a horse must make the most graceful and brilliant appearance in all respects of his own will with the help of aids. [7] Further, if you gallop him during a ride until he sweats freely, and as soon as he prances in fine style, quickly dismount and unbridle him, you may be sure that he will come willingly to the prance. [8]

This is the attitude in which artists represent the horses on which gods and heroes ride, and men who manage such horses gracefully have a magnificent appearance. [9] Indeed a prancing horse is a thing so graceful, terrible and astonishing that it rivets the gaze of all beholders, young and old alike. At all events no one leaves him or is tired of gazing at him so long as he shows off his brilliance. [10]

Should the owner of such a horse happen to be a colonel or a general, he must not make it his object to be the one brilliant figure, but must attach much more importance to making the whole troop behind him worth looking at. [11] Now if a horse is leading in the manner which wins most praise for such horses, prancing high and with his body closely gathered, so that he moves forward with very short steps, the rest of the horses must obviously follow also at a walking pace. Now what can there be really brilliant in such a sight?⁴⁰²

This called for a change of bridle, since a collected horse had to be ridden with a different kind of bridle. Xenophon therefore advised the use of two kinds of bits, as follows:

⁴⁰² PH 11.11.

‘To begin with, you should possess two bits at least. One of these should be smooth and have the discs of a good size; the other should have the discs heavy and low, and the teeth sharp, so that when the horse seizes it he may drop it because he objects to its roughness, and when he is bitted with the smooth one instead, may welcome its smoothness and may do on the smooth bit what he has been trained to do with the aid of the rough one. In case, however, he takes no account of it because of its smoothness, and keeps bearing against it, we put large discs on the smooth bit to stop this, so that they may force him to open his mouth and drop the bit. It is possible also to make the rough bit adaptable by wrapping it up and tightening the reins.

But whatever be the pattern of the bits, they must all be flexible. For wherever a horse seizes a stiff one, he holds the whole of it against his jaws, just as you lift the whole of a spit wherever you take hold of it. But the other kind of bit acts like a chain: for only the part that you hold remains unbent, while the rest of it hangs loose. As the horse continually tries to seize the part that eludes him in his mouth, he lets the bit drop from his jaws. This is why little rings are hung in the middle on the axles, in order that the horse may feel after them with his tongue and teeth and not think of taking the bit up against the jaws.

In case the meaning of the terms flexible and stiff as applied to a bit is not known, we will explain this too. “Flexible” means that the axles have broad and smooth links so that they bend easily; and if everything that goes round the axles has large openings, and does not fit tight, it is more flexible. “Stiff,” on the other hand, means that the pieces of the bit do not run over the axles and work in combination easily.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ PH 10.6-11.

The bit that Xenophon was describing is not the same bit we usually come across on vase paintings and other sources. For example, the horses on the Vix-krater (600 BC) are equipped with bridles that have bits which are very similar to the Assyrian bits. The Assyrian bits have a peculiar triangular shape and the bridles have a high noseband. Similar bits are visible on the François-vase and on the Exekias-amphora (540 BC). Not only were chariot horses bridled in this way, but riding horses too. Comparative research by Helga Donder shows that early Greek bits (from 1300 – 350 BC approx.) are similar to Scythian or Assyrian bits.⁴⁰⁴

The type of bit Xenophon describes was used next to the other type of snaffle from the first half of the fourth century.⁴⁰⁵ This bit dates from the 5th or 4th century and was found originally in Thebes and Corinth.⁴⁰⁶ It seems this bit was adopted from the Celts and was called ‘frenum lupatum’ by the Romans.⁴⁰⁷ According to Donder this is not a curb bit, but a severe snaffle bit. According to Azzaroli, who follows Vigneron, it is a curb bit, since he claims a rein would be fastened on the lower end of the cheek pieces.

According to Azzaroli the oldest curb bits are from Thrace and other regions in the Danube valley. Curb bits were also found in Italy.⁴⁰⁸ Xenophon does not clearly tell us whether this bit was used as a snaffle or curb bit.

In his writings about horsemanship, Xenophon regarded hunting and jumping as very important, and he advised Greeks to hunt while mounted even though

⁴⁰⁴ H. Donder, *Zaumzeug in Griechenland und Cypern*, (C.H. Beck'sche Verlags-Buchhandlung 1980), see also Appendix G.

⁴⁰⁵ Donder (1980) 19 – 67. See also Appendix G.

⁴⁰⁶ Donder (1980) 51, no 80: Thebes, no 81: Corinth; 54: Types 7, 8 and 9 are Greek creations. See also Appendix G.

⁴⁰⁷ Azzaroli (1985) 120.

⁴⁰⁸ Azzaroli (1985) 120. Dating from approx. 300 – 100 B.C.

the Greeks were accustomed to hunting on foot. However, Xenophon's work *On Hunting* does not make reference to mounted hunting, which is somewhat peculiar. Xenophon merely writes about hunting with dogs and refers only to mounted hunters when he deals with the hunting of big game such as lions, leopards, lynxes and so on, which may only be captured in other regions such as Macedonia, Mysia and Nysa beyond Syria.⁴⁰⁹

According to Xenophon, Cyrus the Great used to take horsemen out hunting when he thought they needed such practice, for he held that this offered altogether the best training in military science and superb horsemanship. He regarded it as the best exercise for giving riders a firm seat in all conditions, because they had to pursue their prey wherever it ran. It was also the best exercise for ensuring that they remained active on horseback in view of their rivalry and eagerness to hunt down the game.⁴¹⁰

Xenophon also advises the training of horses and riders in jumping and galloping up and down hills, which may be linked with hunting or cross country riding:

As the horse will frequently have to gallop downhill and uphill and along a slope, and as he will have to leap over, and to leap out, and to jump down at various times, the rider must teach and practise both himself and his

⁴⁰⁹ Xenophon, *Cynegetica* 11.1.

⁴¹⁰ Cyr 2.4.18 – 21; Cyr 8.8.12: again in times past they used to go out hunting so often that the hunts afforded sufficient exercise for both men and horses. CC 8.1.34 – 35.

horse in all these things. For thus they will be able to help each other, and will be thought altogether more efficient.⁴¹¹

‘those that are taught and accustomed to jump ditches, leap walls, spring up banks, leap down from heights without a spill, and gallop down steep places, will be as superior to the men and horses that lack this training as birds to beasts. Moreover, those that have their feet well hardened will differ on rough ground from the tender-footed as widely as the sound from the lame’.⁴¹²

It all makes good sense, as Dom Duarte informs us:

‘In order to be at ease when riding it is necessary to have a good knowledge about all the most important actions you can be required to perform mounted on a beast; otherwise you can neither be at ease nor appear so. (...)’

You should train yourself fully armed and wearing your armour (as if you were going to war) and you should participate in jousts and tournaments (...).

Acting similarly you will be able to be at ease when performing several other activities also important when you are mounted on a beast such as galloping up and down hill, hunting, manoeuvring and throwing spears and playing with canes and striking with a sword. All these activities should be practised by all those who want to be at ease when mounted as it is a known fact that a good and frequent practise is the best of teachers, without which nobody

⁴¹¹ PH 8.1. See also: Arrianus, *Ars Tactica* 44.1 and Dum-Tragut (205) 118 (tekst 24.53a) ‘Danach gehe nach einen freien Ort und lass dort eine Grube machen, voneinander [wie] 20 Ellen entfernt. Richte es so ab, dass es kommt und über diese Grube läuft (= springt).’

⁴¹² CC 8.3.

could acquire the necessary skills; and after having achieved that objective it is mandatory to keep practicing, otherwise the skills will be very quickly forgotten.’⁴¹³

As to the use of weaponry, the cavalry needed to choose between flexibility and safety. Heavy equipment did not always provide a guarantee for victory on the battlefield. The Greek cavalry was equipped with a leather cuirass, a breastplate, a helmet, a ‘hand’ or ‘cheir’ in Greek for protecting the arm holding the reins (i.e. the left hand). The horse was protected by various armour which also served in part for protecting the rider’s legs. The horse’s belly in particular had to be protected. In addition, the saddle cloth was used to protect the horse’s back. The rider had to wear leather boots.

A Greek cavalryman tended to be armed with a sword, though Xenophon recommended the Persian sabre. This offered a more effective thrust. He found that two Persian javelins of cornel wood were easier to manage than the long shafted spear traditionally used by the Greeks.

‘We say, then, that in the first place his breastplate must be made to fit his body. For the well-fitting breastplate is supported by the whole body, whereas one that is too loose is supported by the shoulders only, and one that is too tight is rather an encumbrance than a defence. And, since the neck is one of the vital parts, we hold that a covering should be available for it also, standing up from the breastplate itself and shaped to the neck. For this will serve as an ornament, and at the same time, if properly made, will cover the rider’s face, when he pleases, as high as the nose. For the helmet we consider the Boeotian pattern the most satisfactory: for this,

⁴¹³ Dom Duarte (1438, in the translation of Preto 2005) 70 – 71.

again, affords the best protection to all the parts that project above the breastplate without obstructing the sight. As for the pattern of the breastplate, it should be so shaped as not to prevent the wearer from sitting down or stooping. About the abdomen and middle and round that region let the flaps be of such material and such a size that they will keep out missiles.

And as a wound in the left hand disables the rider, we also recommend the piece of armour invented for it called the "hand." For it protects the shoulder, the arm, the elbow, and the fingers that hold the reins; it will also extend and fold up; and in addition it covers the gap left by the breastplate under the armpit. But the right hand must be raised when the man intends to fling his javelin or strike a blow. Consequently that portion of the breastplate that hinders him in doing that should be removed; and in place of it there should be detachable flaps at the joints, in order that, when the arm is elevated, they may open correspondingly, and may close when it is lowered. For the fore-arm it seems to us that the piece put over it separately like greave is better than one that is bound up together with a piece of armour. The part that is left exposed when the right arm is raised should be covered near the breastplate with calf-skin or metal; otherwise the most vital part will be unprotected.

Since the rider is seriously imperilled in the event of his horse being wounded, the horse also should be armed, having head, chest, and thigh pieces: the last also serve to cover the rider's thighs. But above all the horse's belly must be protected; for this, which is the most vital part, is also the weakest. It is possible to make the cloth serve partly as a protection to it. The quilting of the cloth should be such as to give the rider a safer seat and not to gall the horse's back.

Thus horse and man alike will be armed in most parts. But the rider's shins and feet will of course be outside the thigh-pieces. These too can be guarded if boots made of shoe-leather are worn: there will thus be armour for the shins and covering for the feet at the same time.

These are the defensive arms which with the gracious assistance of heaven will afford protection from harm.

For harming the enemy we recommend the sabre rather than the sword, because, owing to his lofty position, the rider will find the cut with the Persian sabre more efficacious than the thrust with the sword. And, in place of the spear with a long shaft, seeing that it is both weak and awkward to manage, we recommend rather the two Persian javelins of cornel wood. For the skilful man may throw the one and can use the other in front or on either side or behind. They are also stronger than the spear and easier to manage.⁴¹⁴

He recommends, therefore, the use of a Boeotian helmet, and the Persian sabre. He also prefers the Persian cornel-wood javelins to the typical Greek lances. These are first described in *Hellenica*, from which we may conclude that Greek cavalry were no longer using these javelins at that stage:

‘The Hellenic horse was drawn up like an ordinary phalanx four deep, the barbarians presenting a narrow front of twelve or thereabouts, and a very disproportionate depth. There was a moment's pause, and then the barbarians, taking the initiative, charged. There was a hand-to-hand tussle, in which any Hellene who succeeded in striking his man shivered his lance with the blow, while the Persian troopers, armed with cornel-wood

⁴¹⁴ CC12.1 – 12.

javelins, speedily despatched a dozen men and a couple of horses. At this point the Hellenic cavalry turned and fled. (...) It was clear enough to his mind that without a proper cavalry force it would be impossible to conduct a campaign in the flat country.’⁴¹⁵

‘And when the two squadrons saw one another, not so much as four plethra apart, at first both halted, the Greek horsemen being drawn up four deep like a phalanx, and the barbarians with a front of not more than twelve, but many men deep. Then, however, the barbarians charged. [14] When they came to a hand-to-hand encounter, all of the Greeks who struck anyone broke their spears, while the barbarians, being armed with javelins of cornelwood, speedily killed twelve men and two horses. Thereupon the Greeks were turned to flight. But when Agesilaus came to the rescue with the hoplites, the barbarians withdrew again and one of them was killed.’⁴¹⁶

Throwing a javelin from horseback is anything but an effortless task. A rider will need to have excellent control not only over his own movement but also over that of his horse. He will need to be able to ride one-handed, so his horse will need to be well trained. Arrian tells us that throwing a javelin from horseback is fairly difficult and may only be performed by a rider who is well educated in horsemanship.⁴¹⁷ Xenophon contends that not all men but as many as possible should learn how to throw the javelin while mounted. From this remark we may deduce that not all riders were proficient in this kind of horsemanship, Xenophon advised:

⁴¹⁵ Hell 3.4.10 and 11.

⁴¹⁶ Hell 3.4.13 – 14.

⁴¹⁷ Arrian, *Ars Tactica* 40.1.8.

‘As soon as they have acquired a firm seat, your next task is to take steps that as many as possible shall be able to throw the javelin when mounted and shall become efficient in all the details of horsemanship.’⁴¹⁸

Xenophon explained how a Greek cavalryman should practise javelin throwing:

(...) it is a good method of training for two riders to work together thus: one flies on his horse over all kinds of ground and retreats, reversing his spear so that it points backwards, while the other pursues, having buttons on his javelins and holding his spear in the same position, and when he gets within javelin shot, tries to hit the fugitive with the blunted weapons, and if he gets near enough to use his spear, strikes his captive with it.

We recommend throwing the javelin at the longest range possible. For this gives a man more time to turn his horse and to grasp the other javelin. We will also state in a few words the most effective way of throwing the javelin. If a man, in the act of advancing his left side, drawing back his right, and rising from his thighs, discharges the javelin with its point a little upwards, he will give his weapon the strongest impetus and the furthest carrying power; it will be most likely to hit the mark, however, if at the moment of discharge the point is always set on it.⁴¹⁹

In these manoeuvres, proper timing was important, combined with a good seat. Only riders who were seated on their horses in a well-balanced and steadfast manner would have been capable of throwing a javelin on horseback. They would have needed a lot of previous training. Any false movement or loss of

⁴¹⁸ CC 1.5-6.

⁴¹⁹ CC 12.12-13.

balance would have caused the javelin to miss its target. Furthermore, when throwing the javelin, the horse should not be inclined to hesitate or make any unwanted moves. The horse had to be steady and easy to steer, responding quickly to the aids. Xenophon was well aware of this and understood how essential it was. And he wanted the Athenians to appreciate this too.

In Hellenica, Xenophon commented that Agesilaus would allow rich men to shirk cavalry duty by paying for their substitutes and by providing horses for the cavalry. He advised the Athenian hipparchs to do likewise.

Accordingly he assigned the richest men of all the cities in that region to the duty of raising horses; and by proclaiming that whoever supplied a horse and arms and a competent man would not have to serve himself, he caused these arrangements to be carried out with all the expedition that was to be expected when men were eagerly looking for substitutes to die in their stead.

‘I know that the fame of the Lacedaemonian horse dates from the introduction of foreign cavalry: and in the other states everywhere I notice that the foreign contingents enjoy a high reputation (...) I believe that money would be forthcoming from those who strongly object to serve in the cavalry – since even men actually enrolled are willing to pay in order to get out of the service’⁴²⁰

Xenophon also recounted that Agesilaus organised competitions.

Accordingly he assigned the richest men of all the cities in that region to the duty of raising horses; and by proclaiming that whoever supplied a

⁴²⁰ CC 9.4 – 5.

horse and arms and a competent man would not have to serve himself, he caused these arrangements to be carried out with all the expedition that was to be expected when men were eagerly looking for substitutes to die in their stead.

After this, when spring was just coming on, he gathered his whole army at Ephesus; and desiring to train the army, he offered prizes both to the heavy-armed divisions, for the division which should be in the best physical condition, and to the cavalry divisions, for the one which should show the best horsemanship; and he also offered prizes to peltasts and bowmen, for all who should prove themselves best in their respective duties. Thereupon one might have seen all the gymnasia full of men exercising, the hippodrome full of riders, and the javelin-men and bowmen practising.

In fact, he made the entire city, where he was staying, a sight worth seeing; for the market was full of all sorts of horses and weapons, offered for sale, and the copper-workers, carpenters, smiths, leather-cutters, and painters were all engaged in making martial weapons, so that one might have thought that the city was really a workshop of war.

And one would have been encouraged at another sight also—Agesilaus in the van, and after him the rest of the soldiers, returning garlanded from the gymnasia and dedicating their garlands to Artemis. For where men reverence the gods, train themselves in deeds of war, and practise obedience to authority, may we not reasonably suppose that such a place abounds in high hopes? And again, believing that to feel contempt for one's enemies infuses a certain courage for the fight, Agesilaus gave orders to his heralds that the barbarians who were captured by the Greek raiding parties should be exposed for sale naked. Thus the soldiers, seeing that these men were white-skinned because they never were without their

clothing, and soft and unused to toil because they always rode in carriages, came to the conclusion that the war would be in no way different from having to fight with women.⁴²¹

Xenophon advised the deployment of only the best cavalry and he wanted the troops to train themselves. So again he was trying to motivate his troops by suggesting a contest for the best cavalry battalion. Traditions in horsemanship and public display presuppose that *Hippeis* thoroughly train themselves.⁴²² Abandoning such spectacles as a training and motivation technique would, in Xenophon's view, have had alarming consequences:

‘instruction and practice in horsemanship have died out because there are no occasions on which they may give an exhibition and win distinction for skill’.⁴²³

Anyone who was skilled in each particular exercise was ready to participate in combat on horseback.⁴²⁴ To quote Xenophon again:

⁴²¹ Hell 3.4.15 – 19.

⁴²² About Agesilaus writing out contests: Hell 3.4.16-1 and Hell 4.3.9: ‘greatly pleased with his exploit in that he had been victorious, over the people who pride themselves particularly upon their horsemanship with the cavalry that he had himself gathered together.’; also in Cyr 8.1.34: ‘Cyrus used to take out hunting those who he thought ought to have such practise, for he held that this was altogether the best training in military science and also the truest in horsemanship’; also in CC 8.1.35: ‘for it is the exercise best adapted to give riders a firm seat in all sorts of places, because they have to pursue the animals wherever they may run; and it is also the best exercise to make them active on horseback because of their rivalry and eagerness to get the game.’; this is to be found as well in: Cyr 8.8.12: ‘Again in times past they used to go out hunting so often that the hunts afforded sufficient exercise for both men and horses.’ and Cyr 8.8.13: ‘but instruction and practice in horsemanship have died out because there are no occasions on which they may give an exhibition and win distinction for skill.’

⁴²³ Cyr 8.8.13.

⁴²⁴ Cyr 3.3.9-10.

‘those who are conscious that they have been well drilled are certainly more courageous in the face of the enemy.’⁴²⁵

4.6. Influence of Xenophon in Athens

Xenophon would appear to have had immediate success with his treatises. Aristotle writes that the deployment of heavy infantry between the cavalry had become commonplace in his time.⁴²⁶ Images of *Hamippoi* seem to be depicted on Athenian coins of ca. 350 BC.⁴²⁷

Cavalry inspections

Xenophon also advised the Council to:

‘give notice that in future double the amount of exercise will be required, and that any horse unable to keep up will be rejected. This warning would put the screw on the men and make them feed their horses better and take more care of them. I think it would be well, too, if notice were given that vicious horses would be rejected. Under the stimulus of this threat men would break in such animals more thoroughly and would be more careful in buying horses. Again, it would be well to give notice that horses found kicking at exercise will be rejected.’⁴²⁸

Xenophon also advised the holding of *dokimasiai* or inspections in order to establish whether horses were being properly fed, trained and cared for. He also

⁴²⁵ Cyr 2.1.29.

⁴²⁶ Ath. Const. 49.

⁴²⁷ N. Sekunda, *The Ancient Greeks*, Osprey Publishing, New York 2005 (1986 1st print) 54.

⁴²⁸ CC 1.13-15.

advised a major review of riding and manoeuvring practices in order to ensure that the horses remained obedient and fast enough for military purposes.⁴²⁹ The purpose of these inspections was to set a requisite standard of horsemanship and to establish whether or not a cavalryman has acquired this standard. Instead of a ballot to establish whether a rider was a *hippeus* by birth or income, these inspections, as Xenophon sees them, were needed to confirm their horsemanship. This was of course more important on the battlefield than the annual allowance. A man from the *Thetes*-class was permitted to advance to the *Hippeis*. According to Aristotle, Anthemion Diphilos' son dedicated a statue to the gods at the Acropolis after changing his '*Thetes*'-status to *Hippeus*.⁴³⁰

In 1971, excavation of a well close to the Herms brought to light 111 inscribed leaden tablets belonging to an archive that recorded the values of the cavalrymen's horses. These tablets had been dumped in the well in two lots. Of these tablets, known as the Agora-tablets, the 4th century tablets are dated at approximately 350 BC, and the 3rd century ones refer to the middle or third quarter of the 3rd century BC, being identical in type to the 570-odd lead cavalry tablets recovered in 1965 from a well in the courtyard of the Dipylon Gate. These are called the Kerameikos-tablets, dating from the 3rd century BC.⁴³¹

The tablets presumably contain lists of horse values, estimated for purposes of the *dokimasiai* or cavalry inspections. These *dokimasiai* were annual

⁴²⁹ CC 1.3 – 4; 3.1 and 9.

⁴³⁰ Ath. Const. 7.4.

⁴³¹ J. Kroll, *An Archive of the Athenian Cavalry*, *Hesperia* 46, 2, (1977) pp 84 – 100; the 570 lead tablets discovered by the Dipylon Gate were published by Karin Braun in *Athenische Mitteilungen* 85, 1970, pp 129 – 132 and 198 – 269.

inspections of cavalry horses. As Aristotle remarked in his *Athenian Constitution*.⁴³²

The Council also inspects the horses belonging to the state. If a man who has a good horse is found to keep it in bad condition, he is mulcted in his allowance of corn; while those which cannot keep up or which shy and will not stand steady, it brands with a wheel on the jaw, and the horse so marked is disqualified for service. It also inspects those who appear to be fit for service as scouts, and any one whom it rejects is deprived of his horse.’⁴³³

It would be worth taking a look at these tablets from Xenophon’s point of view.

The tablets list, on each line, a masculine name in the genitive, the colour of the horse, brand of horse and price. Based on these tables, the average value of cavalry horses was 700 drachmae or 7 minae, up to a maximum of 1,200 drachmae.⁴³⁴ Kroll observed an increase in the value of the horses on the seventeen 4th century tablets on which the valuations are fully preserved: ‘though small, the 4th century sample implies that during the century that separates the earlier and later groups of tablets, the overall value of the horses used by the Athenian Hippeis had increased’.⁴³⁵

A number of tablets may be classified on the basis of size, shape, textual format, and handwriting. Braun identified six homogeneous series in the Kerameikos tablets, while Kroll distinguished even ten series in the Agora tablets. Tablets in each series seem to have been inscribed for cavalrymen of the

⁴³² Ath. Const. 49.1.

⁴³³ Ath. Const 49.

⁴³⁴ Kroll (1977) 89.

⁴³⁵ Kroll (1977) 89.

same tribe, in view of the regular mention of cavalrymen's *demotika*. Some names of cavalrymen recur in more than one series, and this led Kroll to conclude that each series recorded the evaluations of horses belonging to cavalrymen from a particular tribe for a given year.⁴³⁶

TABLE I: TRIBE OF ERECHTHEIS

SERIES	I (Kerameikos)	II (Kerameikos)	III (Kerameikos)	IV (Agora Series A)	V (Kerameikos)	VI (Kerameikos)	VII (Kerameikos)	VIII (Kerameikos)	IX (Agora Series B)
1. 'Αρκέσας Εύωνιμέυς	πυρρός Κέρβερος XHH			πυρρός σανφόρας HH		μέλας δράκων XHH			μέλας δράκ HHH
2. Διοσκουρίδης Εύωνιμέυς	παρώς 'αγήτηρ XHH						πυρρός λύρα XHH	πυρρός λύρα π[υρρός] Κέρβερος [-]	πυρρ λύρα πυρρ Κέρβερος HHHH
3. Δρομακλῆς Κηφισιεύς				πυρρός πέλυξ HHH	πυρρός πέλυξ HH				πυρρ Κέρβερος HHHH
4. 'Επαίνετος Εύωνιμέυς									πυρρ ἀσσημο πυρρ δρακ [-] πυρρός τρίαν [-]
5. 'Επσιγένης Εύωνιμέυς	πυρρός δράκων X			πυρρός ἀσσημος HHHH			[πυρρός] δρά[-]	πυρρός δράκων XHH	
6. Θεόδωρος Εύωνιμέυς		πυρρός δράκων X							πυρρ δρακ [-]
7. Θεομήδης 'Αναγυράσιος	λευκός 'Αρτεμις X					ποικίλος κράνος X[HH]		ποικίλος κράνος XHH	ποικίλος [κράν] X
8. Θουμήριος (Εύωνιμέυς)	πυρρός χελιδών HHH								πυρρ βουκεφά HHH
9. 'Ιέρων 'Αναγυράσιος	[---] [-]	λευκός ἀετός X		πυρρός 'Αγυεύς πυρρός [---] HHH	πυρρός 'Αγυ[ι]εύς HH			πυρρός [βο] HH	
10. Καλλίας Εύωνιμέυς			πυρρός λέων HHH	πυρρός [---] HHH			πυρρός ἀσσημος HH		
11. Κινίας Εύωνιμέυς		λευκός κρατήρ HH	πυρρός κορώνη HH						
12. Κλεοχάρης Κηφισιεύς				πυρρός ἀσσημος HH	πυρρός ἀσσημος HH		πυρρός ἀσσημος HH	πυρρός πυρρ δράκων HHHH	[---] [---] HHH
13. Νικόμαχος Λαμπρεύς					πυρρός κένταυρος HH	πυρρός δράκων X			
14. Τιμόστρατος (deme?)	παρώς ἀλεκτρονίων HH						πυρρός κερανός HHH	[---] [---] [-]	πυρρ ἀσσημος HHH
15. Τιμωνίδης Εύωνιμέυς									
16. Φαῖδρος (deme?)	πυρρός πέλυξ HHHH								
17. Φιλοκράτης Εύωνιμέυς					μέλας 'Αγυεύς HHH		μέλας ἀσσημος HH		μέλας ἀσσημ HHHH
18. Φιλοκράτης Κηφισιεύς	πυρρός ἀσσημος HHH			πυρρός κορώνη HH				πυρρός ἀσσημος τρίαινα HHH	πυρρ ἀσσημ πυρρ κορ HHH
19. Χαίριων Λαμπρεύς	πυρρός Ξειρήνη X						[---] ἀσσημος XHH		

All in all, Kroll distinguished nine series (I – IX) on Table 1.⁴³⁷ These series were assessed by him on the basis of similarities in handwriting, exterior of the lead tablets and spelling of the horses' colours.⁴³⁸ Most of these are linked given the repetition of the same horses from one series to the next. He based the chronological sequence of these series on the descending values of some horses. He assumed also that the horses' value would fall year on year, as cars do, due to age.⁴³⁹ To me it seems rather unlikely, however, for cavalry horses to

⁴³⁶ Kroll (1977) 92.

⁴³⁷ See also Appendix B for a larger image of Table 1.

⁴³⁸ Kroll (1977) 91.

⁴³⁹ Kroll (1977) 93.

diminish in value due to age alone. An older and presumably more experienced horse would be more valuable than a younger horse with little or no experience. There is no evidence as to the correct chronological sequence of the series, and therefore the horses might well have increased in value. This would be in line with Xenophon's observation on the matter:

If a man buys his horses well, trains them so that they can stand work, and uses them properly in the training for war, in the exhibition rides and on the battle-fields, what is there then to hinder him from making horses more valuable than they are when he takes them over, and why should he not be the owner of famous horses, and also become famous himself for his horsemanship, provided no divine power prevents?⁴⁴⁰

Nevertheless, one of the reasons why some horses had decreased in value would not necessarily have to do with the age of the horse, but rather with the deterioration of a horse owing to a bad rider or trainer or an injury sustained during training or battle. From a rider's point of view, this might have to do with bad riders changing their horses because they have destroyed them physically or psychologically by their poor horsemanship and training, thus diminishing the value of the horses. Xenophon remarked that a horse may also become a loss to its owner if trained wrongly and if it keeps throwing him.⁴⁴¹ He also wrote:

‘(...) some have been brought to penury by keeping horses, while others prosper by doing so, and moreover glory in their gain? (...) seeing that you are forced to meddle with horses, don't you think

⁴⁴⁰ PH 11.13.

⁴⁴¹ Ec 1.8; 2.11.

that common-sense requires you to see that you are not ignorant of the business, the more so as the self-same horses are both good to use and profitable to sell?’⁴⁴²

There is a likelihood that good riders only changed their horses providing they got a relatively good price for them. They were probably reluctant to change horses because it meant that they would have to start the training all over again. It took a few years to get a horse experienced and well-prepared for battle. A cavalryman would have to trust his life to this animal. Therefore if the dating of the series is correct and the horses were becoming less valuable, this would not necessarily be due to ageing alone.

If a horse decreased in value each year due to its age, would it not be logical that all horses would decrease similarly in value? And if so, why would there be a *dokimasia*? And, one might add, if horses can decrease in value, they may also increase in value. If these inspections indeed were held to ascertain the acquired standard of horsemanship, with an additional bonus or allowance also being applicable, this would be a strong motivation for the Hippeis to ensure that their horses received optimum training.

Let us take a closer look at the ancient Athenian series we referred to. Each cavalryman who appears in more than one series owned at least two different horses during the period covered in Table I, and some would seem to have had

⁴⁴² Ec 3.7 – 9. Xenophon makes it clear that ‘vicious behaviour of horses’ is the fault of their riders. He takes his views on horse training as a way of working with your horse instead of treating the animals as a subordinate one step further as he comments on the way men were treating their wives: ‘men should succeed in winning the co-operation of their wives and should instruct them rightly. If they find their wives ignorant, they should blame themselves. He sheds a different view on the Greek marriage as he continues: ‘Is there anyone to whom you commit more affairs of importance than you commit to your wife? – There is not. Is there anyone with whom you talk less? – There are few or none, I confess’. (Ec 3.10 – 14.)

four horses in a three-year period.⁴⁴³ Either they were poor riders who had to change horses every year, or good trainers who could easily sell off their horses at favourable prices.⁴⁴⁴ A third possibility may well be that horses became lame during this period or were put to stud. From a rider's point of view, if horses devalued every year (like cars), why bother training them? And from the horse trade point of view: people would only be interested in buying young inexperienced horses.

Since tablet 1 gives an overview of a period of some nine years, it would be interesting to see if there are any horses called 'spotted' (or probably more appropriately, 'dappled').⁴⁴⁵ Dappled horses turn white during their lifetime, usually at the age of nine. Therefore the dappled horses more likely were younger than nine years old. As I stated earlier, the starting age for a cavalry charger was presumably about four years old. From this I would conclude that the dappled horses were aged approximately 4 – 9 years. We can therefore compare at least some of the horses based on their age.

⁴⁴³ Kroll (1977) 93.

⁴⁴⁴ Research on the economics of event horses production shows that the average total period of time necessary for the training of a young, unbroken horse to a level where it could be resold, is 1.7 years. Therefore it is not unthinkable that a good horseman could sell a horse once a year. Source: *A preliminary investigation of the economics of event horse production*, K. D. Hennessy, J. Murphy & P. Brophy (Dublin 2005). (http://www.agresearchforum.com/publicationsarf/2005/047_page.pdf) [last visited: 28 juli 2009]

⁴⁴⁵ Kroll translates ποικίλος as 'spotted' thus missing the connection between white and dappled (grey) horses. If there were white horses in Athens, there must have been 'greys' as well, as this is the first coloured stadium of w white horse, which is born either black, bay or chestnut. He does mention the use of ψαρίος in the tablets once which means 'starling'-coloured and is also generally translated as dappled. Aristotle explains in *Historia Animalium* 9.26 that ψαρός is ποικίλος, speckled. In Zech 6:3 and 6:6 ποικίλος and ψαρός are alternately used for grey (dappled) horses. It is quite improbable that ποικίλος could have meant 'spotted' as this is a rather rare colour for a horse. Dappled horses are more common and the first stadium of white horses.

Cavalry Archives 3rd century

Value	White		Dappled	
100				
200			1	
300		1*		
400				
500	4			
600	3	1*		
700	1		2	
800				
900				
1,000	5		5	
1,100				
1,200	2		4	2*
Total	15		12	
*White horses valued twice	2			
*Dappled horses valued thrice	1			
Average value, all tablets	700			

Table 1. Values of dappled and white cavalry horses in Athens (3rd century BC)

Unfortunately none of the dappled horses return as white horses on the table. From the table above we may observe that nine of the twelve younger dappled horses were valued at the highest price (1,000 - 1,200 drachmae). Seven of the fifteen white horses were also valued at the highest price. We might conclude therefore that the younger horses do fetch higher values.⁴⁴⁶ But when we take into account that most horses were valued at 500 drachmae,⁴⁴⁷ the white horses all appear in the upper zones and only one of them is valued at less than 500 drachmae. This horse is actually valued twice on the tablets, once at 600

⁴⁴⁶ There may be something else at issue. According to Vergil, grey horses were higher valued than white ones, on the market (Vergil, *Eclogae* 3.82). Nor Xenophon nor Pollux, however, offer any evidence of this type.

⁴⁴⁷ Kroll (1977) 89.

drachmae and once at 300. Another white horse is valued twice at 600 drachmae.

Some horses are valued at the same amount for a few years in succession. Kroll assumes, probably correctly, that these horses were worth more than the maximum price the state would offer, therefore these horses could be valued each time in succession at 1,200 drachmae. From this I would like to conclude that it is not age alone that determines the value of a horse.

I would also like to make some further remarks on Kroll's chronology. First of all, Kroll did not include some of the tablets from the Erechtheis tribe in his table. Philokrates of Kephis had a horse which Kroll values at 900 drachmae and the year after at 500. But Braun values the same horse at 400 drachmae and at 500 the year after.⁴⁴⁸

The white horse with the *kranos* brand of Theomedes of Anagurias was valued at 1,200 drachmae for three years (in the first year, its value was probably 1,100 drachmae because there was only one place left after the X instead of two⁴⁴⁹) and in the fourth year it was valued only at 1,000 drachmae. Therefore based on this conjecture, if the initial value was 1,100 drachmae, this horse would have increased and then decreased in value.

⁴⁴⁸ K530 at Braun (1970). She values this horse at 400. Kroll states that 'with some cleaning, traces emerged at the left of a horizontal, suggesting possibly 900. Neither reading allows us confidently to associate the chestnut, unmarked horse with the similar horse valued at 500 in Series IX, for it would be extraordinary for a horse to gain 100 drachmas or to lose as much as 400 drachmas in a year.' Nevertheless, the *purros asemos* of Philokrates of Euonymon would have decreased from 900 to 500 if we accept Kroll's chronology.

⁴⁴⁹ K203 at Braun (1970). She values the horse at X[], this can either be XHH or XH. Kroll gives X [] [] here.

			1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9			
							5 is almost identical to 4				8 is almost identical to 9				
Theomachos		pu ch 700													
Timostratos		pa al 600													
Phaidros		pu pe 800													
Phoxios		pa eg 500													
Antestas Euonymos		pu keb 700			pu san 600			me dr 1200				me dr 700			
Hieron Anagura		<i>onbekend</i>	leu ale 1000		pu ag 700	pu ag 500				pu ly 1200		pu bo 500	pu bo 300	pu ly 1200	
Diskourides Euonymos		pa kr 1200													
Diskourides Euonymos		<i>onbekend</i>													
Epigenes Euonymos		<i>onbekend</i>								<i>onleesbaar</i>		<i>onleesbaar</i>	pu tri	pu dr	
Theomedes Anagu		le ar 1000						poi kran 1100			poi kran 1200	poi kran 1000			
Philokrates Euonymos		pu as 700							me as 500				me as 400		
Kineas			le kr 500	pa 1100											
Theodoros Euonymos			pu dr 1000		pu as 400								pu as 400		
Epainetos Euonymos			pu as 800		pu pe 700	pu pe 600									
Kleochares Kephis					pu as 600	pu as 600				pu as 600		pu per 700			
Philokrates Kephis					pu ko 500	me ag 700				pu as 600		pu as 400	pu as 500	<i>increased value!</i>	
Kallias Euonymos				pu le 700	ka pu								pu 500		
Nikomachos Lamptrai						pu ken 600		pu dr 1000				pu dr 900	700		
Dromokles Kephis								me dr 200				pu kerb	pu kerb 300		
Timonides Euonymos								pu ker 300		<i>onleesbaar</i>			pu as 300		
Chairiron Lamptrai		pu sei 1000								me as 1200		pu tri 1200		pu kor 1200	
Epameinon												pu dr 600			
Epichares										<i>onleesbaar</i>					
Not included in Erechtneis table by Kroll:															
Theodoros Euonymos?		purros		lura		500			k196						
Hieron ?		melas				700			k245						
Philokrates Euonymos						700			k528						
Chairiron Lamptrai		purros		asemos		1200			k552						
Nikomachos Lamptrai		purros		aletos		1200			k418						

The *asemos* horse of Kleocharos of Kephis would have been valued at 600 drachmae for four consecutive years. Admittedly, Kroll contends that this may refer to two horses instead of one, because a *purros asemos* was quite common. Nevertheless why would a rider buy another horse of exactly the same value? And even if two different horses were listed here, they would still not have decreased in value because of age.

Also, the *purros drakoon* of Nikomachos of Lamptraí is valued at 1,000 drachmae, and two years later at 900. This horse did not devalue in the year in between. The *drakoon* horse of Arkesas of Euonymon was valued at 1,200 drachmae but in two years had decreased in value by an unprecedented 500 drachmae to 700. This horse cannot have aged more rapidly than the other horses. Similarly, in the case with Hieron of Anagurias, his *purros ag* was valued at 700 drachmae and the year after at only 500. His *purros bo* decreased in value from 500 drachmae to 300. The horse of Philokrates of Eonymon would have decreased from 900 drachmae to 500 in only one year and his *me asemos* would have dropped in value in a two-year period from 500 drachmae to 400, which appears somewhat inconsistent. It is worth noting in my view that Chairioon, who had at least four horses during this listed period, owned an expensive horse each time. Perhaps he trained his horses well and sold them off at a good price or was rewarded for his good horsemanship. As we have seen earlier on, Xenophon argued, the proper training of horses can also be lucrative.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁵⁰ CC 11.13.

On the one hand, the proper training of horses was vital for the rider's own safety and for its military value to the cavalry. On the other hand, it could also provide an economic return, which may have been a decisive factor for the entrepreneurial Athenian. There was a motivation here to train a horse for war; the trainer was valued for the hard work involved and there was a profit to be made too.

The Council also inspects the Knights' chargers, and if anybody having a good horse keeps it in bad condition, it fines him the cost of the feed, and horses that cannot keep up with the squadron or will not stay in line but it brands on the jaw with the sign of a wheel, and a horse so treated has failed to pass the inspection. It also inspects the mounted skirmishers, to see which it considers fit for skirmishing duty, and any that it votes to reject are thereby deposed from that rank. It also inspects the foot-soldiers that fight in the ranks of the cavalry, and anyone it votes against is thereby stopped from drawing his pay.⁴⁵¹

As Aristotle informs us above, it had become commonplace in the meantime for riders and horses to be evaluated on their standards of horsemanship and training, based on the benchmarks which Xenophon set out in his treatises on Horsemanship and the Cavalry Commander. The army now had to train for their salary.

In the Hellenica, too, this was recommended by Polydamas of Pharsalus in Thessaly, in an address he made to the Lacedaemonians when he appeared before them in an assembly:

⁴⁵¹ Ath. Const. 49.

`As for numbers,' he [Jason of Pherae, Thessaly] said, `of course as great a force might march out of some other city also; but armies made up of citizens include men who are already advanced in years and others who have not yet come to their prime. Furthermore, in every city very few men train their bodies, but among my mercenaries no one serves unless he is able to endure as severe toils as I myself.' [6] And he himself — for I [Polydamas of Pharsalus] must tell you the truth — is exceedingly strong of body and a lover of toil besides. Indeed, he makes trial every day of the men under him, for in full armour he leads them, both on the parade-ground and whenever he is on a campaign anywhere. And whomsoever among his mercenaries he finds to be weaklings he casts out, but whomsoever he sees to be fond of toil and fond of the dangers of war he rewards, some with double pay, others with triple pay, others even with quadruple pay, and with gifts besides, as well as with care in sickness and magnificence in burial; so that all the mercenaries in his service know that martial prowess assures to them a life of greatest honour and abundance.⁴⁵²

We may conclude now, that Athens had finally understood that the Hippeis had to train their horses on a daily basis so that a regiment could operate with excellent timing and for this, collection and precision are both vital factors. The ability to fight in formation, particularly in combination with the infantry, as Xenophon advised, calls for special training of horses and men. They must be capable of turning quickly and keeping apace. This can only be achieved by means of collection. Battle cavalry that will attack hoplites will need to operate in small spaces. Therefore collection of the horse is of primary importance. Collection is a result of good horsemanship which must be learned and be trained regularly.

⁴⁵² Hell 6.1.5 – 6.

4.7. Conclusions on Xenophon

It would appear that Xenophon was none too happy with the development of Athens over the years as described by Aristotle, who makes clear that it had become democratised and fallen prey to political intrigue and chicanery by popular rulers. Nor did Xenophon very much like the consequences this had for the state of Athens. This was a development that directly impacted on the army, particularly the cavalry because without proper training the cavalry would suffer. Moreover the old naucrarian cavalry no longer sufficed, and the new battlefield cavalry had to maintain a proper training regime.

The Athenian democracy often backfired, particularly where the army was concerned because it had more need for professionals than politicians. It must have been a great source of disappointment for Xenophon, who believed that his hometown was well-capable of achieving hegemony and yet saw this being made impossible time and again with the democratic system. Expeditions led to nothing and the cavalry was prevented from developing its full fighting potential.

Xenophon may well have succeeded by his treatises in getting Athens to appreciate the importance of *hamippoi* and to accept their deployment. Athenian coins have been found with images of *hamippoi* in 350 BC. Aristotle wrote also that it had become standard practise to deploy *hamippoi*.

Also, Xenophon's recommendation that the cavalry be screened based on horsemanship rather than income would appear to have been implemented, as we can see from Aristotle's work and the cavalry tablets that were found.

Chapter 5. Conclusions

Greece saw a development in cavalry warfare between the Archaic period and the beginning of the Macedonian domination. Up to then, its main preoccupation was dealing with border skirmishes; the cavalry was not being deployed on the battlefield but rather for purposes of foraging, harassing the enemy, destroying the land around a city and for running to ground retreating infantry. This all changed when the Persians began to take an interest in Greece. Athens and Sparta were confronted with a land war on different fronts and had to face a cavalry that used combat techniques which heretofore were unknown to them.

Athens up to that point had a cavalry that was suited to the tasks outlined above. This is referred to as a *naucrary* cavalry, which is an Athenian term. The Persians fought from a long distance, fielding their mounted archers, and were not able to fight the Athenian infantry. The Athenians soon realised after the Persian wars that they needed to increase their cavalry numbers, not in order to form a large cavalry battalion, but rather for purposes of deploying more *naucraries* simultaneously. There was little change therefore in the warfare techniques. The Athenian cavalry also had little success in Sicily and were surprised by the Sicilian cavalry which, contrary to the most powerful cavalry of Greece (the Thessalian cavalry), was quite willing to attack the hoplite lines and throw their spears.

Thessaly had a relatively enormous cavalry which it deployed on the battlefield. However these riders were particularly good in surprise attacks on hoplites who were not yet in battle formation or in running retreating soldiers to ground.

They would not attack hoplites who were in battle formation. Boeotia had its own cavalry, and in the Persian Wars sided with the Persians. The Boeotians supported the Persians with their cavalry and in fact deployed the cavalry similarly to the Thessalians.

Unrest persisted throughout the classical period because Athens, Sparta and Thebes continued to fight amongst themselves for hegemony in the Greek part of the Mediterranean Sea. Their level of training was now improving all the time because they were fighting now more and more in situations in which cavalry could do a useful job. The cavalry found itself playing an increasingly important role in these wars. The Greeks therefore developed their cavalry tactics and battle cavalry during this period, and this represented a departure from the standard raiding and other tasks to which the cavalry had been accustomed heretofore.

Boeotia developed *hamippoi*, who were hoplites working together with the cavalry. These were being deployed on the battlefield as early as 419 or 418 BC and were proving very effective. The Boeotian battle cavalry dominated the battlefield. The Athenian naucrary cavalry was not a match for it. The Spartan king, Agesilaus II, seems to have begun deploying infantry and cavalry together on the battlefield around 395 BC, according to Xenophon, after discovering during his campaign in Caria in Asia Minor that the infantry alone would not suffice against the Persian cavalry.

In the Battles at Tegyra (375 BC), Leuctra (371 BC) and thereafter in the Battle at Mantinea (362 BC), the Boeotian general from Thebes, Epaminondas, deployed his cavalry, infantry and *hamippoi* in a dense square formation. With

his improvement of these Boeotian battle tactics he outgeneraled Agesilaus on the battlefield.

Epaminondas had well-trained men at his command who were very capable of converting his tactical insight into action on the battlefield and forming dense formations of both cavalry and infantry, thus allowing him to score several decisive victories over Sparta and Athens. The square cavalry formation usually deployed as a dense horse phalanx supported by heavy infantry began to be seen on the battlefield. Thebes defeating Sparta and Athens left the Greek states in confusion. A power vacuum arose.

Xenophon analysed this situation meticulously and tried to get the Athenians to do something about the power vacuum that had arisen after the Battle at Mantinea.

Xenophon understood how important the cavalry fighting in formation would become on the battlefield and how necessary it would be for the cavalry and the infantry to be deployed as a tactical unit. The Athenians had to recognise this and to discontinue with their ad hoc training of both these units. Xenophon also recognised the importance of discipline and authority within the army. He described how questioning the capacity of one's command could impact negatively on the overall functioning of the force and that the command should only be assumed by people who were professionally competent to perform this task. When there is no confidence, orders cannot be passed on and the soldiers or cavalrymen will not know where they stand. This can be fatal on the battlefield and while on a march.

He was thus concentrating his efforts because he needed to alert Athens to the importance of taking the cavalry and acquiring horsemanship seriously. All aspects of horsemanship are important to the functioning of cavalry, especially if it is to fulfill its task as a battle cavalry fighting in formation. The performance of the cavalry as a combat unit will succeed or fail depending on the level of training received by both horse and rider alike. Horses must be prepared for all eventualities, such as unexpected situations (sudden enemy attack which necessitates a galloping retreat, dead bodies, an ability to leap over trenches, making quick turns and various assault manoeuvres). Moreover horses must work closely with their riders, forming one unit. The riders need to train their horses to such an extent that they will be able to withstand hardship and trust their riders, who in turn require a good understanding of speed, formation and tactics.

Horsemanship is a skill that encompasses not only the riding of a horse, but also thorough knowledge of horses, horse breeds, their character, build, training requirements, use of bridles, and so on. For the cavalryman, this demands a thorough knowledge of weaponry, exercises, formations and cavalry tactics.

The cavalry commander should be better than his riders, otherwise he cannot substantiate his superior position. He must therefore be a superior horseman, better in combat tactics and be capable of training his men well. In addition, he needs to have a good strategic insight in order to be successful in war and on the battlefield.

When lacking a high standard of horsemanship, a cavalry may be successful in minor skirmishes but if facing a cavalry on the battlefield that is being deployed as a tactical and strategic weapon, a poorly trained cavalry will prove unsuccessful.

Xenophon appeared to be making every attempt to encourage the Athenians to prepare themselves before it was too late, and before another attack from Thebes, despite the fact that they were at peace after 362 BC. In his two books called 'On Horsemanship' and 'Cavalry commander', he set out the experiences he had gained himself in Persia with Agesilaus, his Spartan friend, during various cavalry battles. However his accounts on the cavalry and horse training were not restricted to these books alone. In a number of philosophical works and in his analyses of Agesilaus and Cyrus the Great we see further mention of these.

He carefully studied the tactics used in the Battle at Mantinea. Epaminondas was a commander who was an excellent leader and strategist, who knew well how to train and field his cavalry. In *Cavalry Commander*, he made reference also to a number of tactical issues, including the formation the Boeotians had used in the battles against Sparta and how this formation could best be employed and why. Epaminondas is referred to in Xenophon's *Cavalry Commander*, which he constructed in a manner that concealed the fact that he was referring to a Boeotian strategist. Xenophon had a deep hatred against Thebes, as did Agesilaus, and other Athenians and Spartans.

Thus, he could not refer to Epaminondas by name and in fact the *Cavalry Commander* is the only work of Xenophon which lacks an 'example'. In his other works he concentrated on or mentions significant figures from earlier or his own times such as Agesilaus, Cyrus the Great and Socrates. In 'On Horsemanship' he refers to Simon of Athens. His own voice though comes through in *Ways and Means*, in which he sets out his views on Athens and proceeds to make his own recommendations, including his wish that Athens would once regain hegemony in Greece. In this context, he wrote his 'On

Horsemanship’ and ‘On the Cavalry Commander’ in his attempt to emphasise and re-emphasise the importance of cavalry training, formation and tactics in which in his view the Athenians would need to train themselves, to be able to face Thebes or any other enemy.

Why had it not been possible up to that point to upgrade the Athenian cavalry to a higher level of horsemanship? Athens, a democracy, had a lot of difficulties with its cavalry. This was because time and again the democracy had sought to have people in leadership positions on the basis of general elections, and this did not automatically deliver the most suitable people to these positions, i.e. men who were fit for the job, a job which after all went to those who ran the best election campaigns. This is a criticism that was also made at the time, especially since the beginning of the 4th century when democracy had reached its summit and politicians only thought of their own profits, according to Aristotle and others.

With the positions of leadership being filled by people who knew next to nothing about the actual issues of horse training, cavalry training, tactics and strategy, cavalymen had little confidence in leaders or refused point blank to obey orders or to serve under such people. The cavalry in this respect was a much more vulnerable part of the army than the infantry, simply because horses were being used and horses require a certain degree of appropriate training in order to function as planned. This training would not only cost time; it also demanded insight and experience, and it was almost impossible to gain this on the battlefield.

In the Athenian democracy, people were appointed to the position of cavalry commander once elected to that position. Therefore it was not a question of who was the best cavalryman or who made the best general but rather who had gained the greatest popularity. It now became impossible to properly train and lead the cavalry, due also to the fact that the real horsemen who were serving in the cavalry felt nothing but scorn for such a leader. Moreover Athens was a commercial city that was motivated by profit. Businessmen of the top classes were mainly interested in money-making or politics and did not want to be wasting their time and money with horses and horse training. Athens fell far short in the quality of its horsemanship owing to the democratic and commercial system that prevailed.

Particularly so after the Oligarchy of the Thirty in 404, when they determined that the scrutiny of the cavalry would be based on their political and economical merits for the city of Athens. The ultimate result being that the cavalry could have no real success on the battlefield. In the fourth century, the Athenian cavalry had to resign itself to this fact as soon as they found themselves faced with a state led by capable generals.

This cavalry tended to come from aristocratic or oligarchic regimes, where the cavalry traditionally belonged to the aristocracy exclusively and where horsemanship was accorded a much higher status. The aristocrats were well trained horsemen in this regard, and moreover were led by commanders who had attained a high level of horsemanship.

The cavalry had always been associated with aristocratic or oligarchic states. The horse was used by the aristocracy mainly for parading, racing or other competitions during peacetime, but in times of war these horses were also

deployed on the battlefield. The aristocracy was traditionally regarded a horse-minded class. For them, however the horse is not a means of existence as it is for the nomads. The aristocracy uses the horse for hunting, parading or battle and in that sense one might say that they are knowledgeable in the art of training and handling horses. They more than likely can afford to pay for the keeping and training of their horses. They appreciate the importance of ongoing training for the horse. Many aristocrats had their own studs with special bloodlines which produced good racehorses or warhorses. They also kept good racehorses, as did Hiero of Syracuse or Alkibiades of Athens. These men knew how to handle their horses.

Horsemanship is a craft which can be acquired only by daily training and giving oneself over to what we call 'horsemindedness'. This is all the more important for those in a superior position. If they don't understand what they are talking about, they will soon lose the respect of their men. Horsemindedness is a quality that will be prevalent amongst people who are used to working with horses, for example, the Scythian nomads. For these people, horses are part of their daily lives. The expert handling, training and riding of horses for them is an everyday experience. In other cultures we see the horse traditionally being associated with the aristocracy, because in an urban culture, the horse is regarded a luxury item. A businessman or worker will be too busy with business or work and will have little time to devote to the training of a horse, unless there is commercial gain to be had.

After the decline of Sparta as a military power in 362 BC Xenophon wanted to pass on his expertise on horsemanship, cavalry training and warfare, so that Athens could once again reach for hegemony in Greece. It would appear that

Xenophon's recommendations after the Battle at Mantinea were incorporated in the Laws of Athens. According to Aristotle, the combination of cavalry and infantry became commonplace and the annual cavalry inspections were no longer held mainly for determining whether the *Hippeis* conformed to the income standards but rather to determine whether the horses were in good shape and were receiving adequate training. The horses were then valued on the results and were accorded a *timesis* or value. There is archaeological evidence of the existence of *hamippoi* in Athens dating from around 350 BC. According to Aristotle, as well, *hippodromoi* or *hamippoi* were deployed by Athens in his time.

The conclusion of my research therefore must be that notwithstanding the various victories scored by the Athenians in a number of skirmishes, it seems the insight was lacking when it came to their cavalry and the need for their training. In practice they were forced to learn time and again from bitter experience on the battlefield itself and from the 'trial and error' of politics.

The Athenians have experienced some successes, especially in pursuing and finishing off other cavalry, as happened at Mantinea after Epaminondas had died, but a properly efficient and strong cavalry which could fight in square formation was never within their grasp because they simply lacked the requisite level of military horsemanship, which demands much more than mere horse riding skills.

APPENDIX A

Ordinance Notes - No. 297, Washington, May 7, 1883

THE CAVALRYMAN AND HIS HORSE

By Lieut. S. C. ROBERTSON, · First Cavalry, U. S. A.

[From the United Service]

In a country like ours, with its more than eleven million horses, where soil and climate give us the best of breeds, and where there are some of the finest natural horsemen in the world, it is a matter for regret that horsemanship in its higher form should not be more thoroughly developed. With respect to our cavalry service, especially, is this to be deplored. Possessing a splendid personnel, good horses, and a perfect equipment, we need but the acquirement of this art to make ours the superior of almost every other service in the world. That the necessity for attaining it exists, few of our
10 officers will deny; the history of our frontier service is replete with incidents which prove it. In how many Indian fights of even recent years have unfortunate troopers fallen victims to bad riding or unskillful management of their horses, and how many valuable animals have been lost to the Government in our campaigns by bad seats and the ignorance of men untrained to the saddle?

For all these things the peculiar nature of our past service has been to a certain extent an excuse, but in the near future, as isolated detachments are consolidated in permanent posts, and thorough drill is thereby rendered possible, our attention must
20 unavoidably be directed to the more perfect training of the cavalry trooper. As long as cavalry exists, however it may be armed or maneuvered, the fundamental principle of such instruction will be horsemanship; that science which gives the soldier perfect control over the machine which transports him; which makes it safe for himself and effective against his enemy; which gives him confidence in his own prowess, and which inspires him with an esprit de corps, and a love for his horse and the saddle which every cavalryman who is really master of his steed must feel. There is nothing chimerical
30 in these ideas. Scientific riding is an art more practiced by the civilian abroad to-day than ever before, and all of the great cavalry services-those of Germany, Austria, Russia, France, England, even poor, unhorsemanlike Italy-are devoting their every energy toward perfecting both officers and men in it. Shall we, their

equals in nearly all else, their superior in many things, confess ourselves behind them in one of the most important departments of our profession ? No one can claim that our tactics do not contemplate instruction in equitation and the knowledge of the horse, for, brief as its requirements are, and skeleton-like as are its elementary rules upon the former subject, it does prescribe that
40 officers shall "have a thorough knowledge of the structure and powers of endurance of horses," and be "familiar with the rules for their management under all circumstances. to understand in detail the method of shoeing them, and to be able to treat all ordinary cases of injury and disease." West Point gives a better education than any other school the world, but of these matters what does it teach? A graceful position, a fairly good seat, to use the saber and pistol (this excellently well, too) on horseback, to mount at a gallop, and one or two other accomplishments of a similar nature, and there our horsemanship and knowledge of the horse end, the
50 latter never passing zero during the whole time. On the frontier this is supplemented by such information as individual ambition or research, or accident, may supply. The refinements of equitation, however, the principles of the haute ecole, as it is called abroad, we neglect almost entirely. With such exercises as the "piaffer," "pirouette," "circling on the forehand," "changing of hand," the "volte," the different "passages," and many other exercises in the "setting-up" of horse and rider, we never bother ourselves. Yet they are considered the A B C of his profession by even the youngest cavalry "sub" abroad, and certainly no horseman
60 calls himself really accomplished without being able to perform them. In no other way can he reach the end supposed to be desirable with every cavalryman, of communicating to his charger his every impulse, of making him obedient and ready to act instantly and according to his will in every emergency., in short, of making his steed and himself, as nearly as possible, one. But, leaving out the question of accomplishment and the haute ecole, should not all of us in our arm understand thoroughly the breaking, biting, and training of the horses drafted into the cavalry? We have to deal here with a question involving not only professional pride, but
70 professional duty. Do we understand these things as we should or is not rather the following the actual case very often, and a reply to the question at the same time?

A horse is assigned to a troop. Nothing is known of him except that he has been ridden, and appeared sound to the purchase board when bought. He is assigned to a trooper-possibly a recruit. To this man has been issued a bridle. It may have a No .1, or a No. 2, or, for all that he generally knows, a No.10 bit. It don't matter; in it

goes, without reference to the size of the animal's mouth perhaps without even adjusting the check-piece, so as to place it at the proper height in the mouth (few men know this height anyhow) he leads the poor brute, with its cheeks pinched, or possibly its tongue nearly cut in two by a narrow port, out to drill. Is it any wonder that the horse becomes unmanageable, or that it is known in a week or so as the "champion bucker" of the troop. The man lingers on, dreading every "boots and saddles" as a call from the lower regions themselves, bound to a creature which he can neither ride nor manage, until, finally, the poor animal goes the way of nearly all such horseflesh and is condemned for his ill nature or some curb or spavin which the torture inflicted on him had produced. This result, of course, is brought on in many cases by some other species of ignorance than that displayed in bad biting, but the illustration chosen represents many actual cases and shows the necessity of knowledge on such points. The non-commissioned officers who are the drill-masters of recruits have learned in the same school as the latter, and consequently know nothing more than they, except the few things that longer experience-not instruction-in the service has taught them. Were there skillful horsemen among the officers of their troops, officers who understood thoroughly this portion of their profession and who made it their business to see that the men under them were intelligently taught how to handle their horses and become good riders themselves, then indeed, and not till then, would we be, in the true sense of the word, cavalrymen. Foreign nations consider the smallest details of all this instruction as necessary for the education of both officers and men.

In the French school of cavalry at Saumur, where the writer had the privilege of spending nearly a year, he has seen a class of officers kept for days in recitation upon the single subject just referred to - biting; and he has seen the same class "stand to horse" for nearly three-quarters of an hour in the riding hall until every bit, curb, and strap about their horses' heads was placed to the instructor's satisfaction. Any bit that did not fit, whose mouth-piece was too narrow, or too thick, or the reverse, or whose bars were too powerful for a particularly tender mouth, or which had some other defect discernible only to his practiced eye, was either exchanged for another or turned over to the armorer for alteration. The idea of fitting bits, saddles, or other gear indiscriminately to their animals would be to them preposterous. They may appear at first glance overscrupulous in their attention to these things, but the result justifies them, for their horses are magnificently "dressed," and their mouths, in most cases, simply perfect. The animals thus trained were no more docile than our own usually are on

entering the service, yet their education for the ranks by the employment of these careful and judicious methods was, in most cases, fully completed in two or three months.

To understand more finely the importance attached to everything connected with horsemanship and the horse in the mounted services abroad, let us examine briefly the training of the French cavalry officer in these respects, and then let us confess how culpable and
130 unworthy, by comparison, is our own indifference in regard to them. He enters St. Cyr with usually about the same proficiency in riding as the average West Pointer; for coming, as he nearly always does, in the case of a cavalry cadet. from an aristocratic family, he has probably seen and ridden good horses from earliest boyhood. During his first year's course his studies are in common with those of the infantry cadet, and he rides, like the latter, only three times a week. At the end of the first year he expresses his preference for the cavalry arm. He is then immediately separated from his infantry
140 colleagues, and his education as a trooper commences in real earnest, everything else being subordinate to this training. He studies an extensive course in hippology, is taught practically all the elementary principles regarding the treatment of sick horses and their handling, and is kept in the riding-hall or at mounted drill on the cavalry plain during an average of three hours a day. A slight calculation will show how much more he rides in his two years' course than the cadet in our academy during his four. After graduating at St. Cyr and spending another year in the cavalry school at Saumur he enters a service, not where his acquirements
150 thus gained are valueless and left to rust and decay, but where his enthusiasm is fostered and his /esprit de corps /continually encouraged by the nature of both his duties and amusements. As a second lieutenant he is required personally to drill recruits both in the riding-hall and on the drill-ground, and to teach them in theory and practice all the elementary details concerning the management of their horses, the adjustment of their harness, &C He himself is either required, or from voluntary pride seeks, to perfect himself in skillful feats of horsemanship, iii the riding-school or on the steeple-course. He is constantly drilled, and goes over frequently in the regimental schools the theory of
160 hippology and equitation, which he has studied as a cadet and at Saumur. He is surrounded by officers, old and young, who encourage his interest in these things by that which they display in themselves. Much of their spare time is spent in the handling of the difficult horses of their squadrons, or in the training and exercising of their own chargers. The writer has often seen an officer after several hours' hard drill dismount and immediately

leap to the back of some horse of his own held in waiting by his orderly, and then spend the same length of time perhaps in putting his animal through the manege drill, or in teaching him some
170 little trick of taking a hurdle upon the steeple-course. He does this for his own amusement and from a spirit of emulation excited in him by the zeal which the officers about him display in the same occupations. Even the gray headed colonels do not disdain to countenance this enthusiasm by their own example, and they are often seen on the training- ground or following the hounds with as much enthusiasm as their subalterns. in another service that we know of, is not the young officer who shows a fondness for the horse and for being constantly in the saddle looked upon with a sort of pity as a
180 "green youngster" who will "get over such nonsense when he is older," and do not many of the older officers-those, too, whose age in nowise unfits them for the saddle-seem to consider it more consistent with their rank and dignity to drive about in their ambulances and buggies than to be seen on horseback? Why should such false ideas exist?

In the other army we speak of they would not be tolerated, and officers who thus shunned and renounced their steeds would bring themselves into great contempt for such lack of /esprit de corps, for such it certainly is.

The conversation of their mess-table at Saumur (and the same
190 thing may be said of all messes at which the writer has been in their cavalry garrisons) abounded in "horse talk," most interesting to those who love and understand the horse, but incomprehensible to those who do not. At each breakfast, for instance, Lieutenant X would tell to interested listeners at his end of the table how Lieutenant Y, in the same division, had come off in the morning steeple-chase with certain officers in another division, or how Lieutenant Z had lost the brush from a fall, or bad riding, in the previous day's hunt or perhaps another party would be discussing with an animation worthy of the most serious subject the points and
200 action of Lieutenant So-and-So's new purchase in the horse line. Conversation was always ready among these officers. and numerous other topics existed, but on none was interest so constantly unflagging as upon this.

The above seem trivialities too small almost to be written, but the writer's object is to portray the different lights in which these matters are viewed at home and abroad.

As has been previously intimated, the hunt is much in vogue in

all French cavalry garrisons, even the smallest of them generally managing to have its meet at least once a week in the season. Of
210 course this induces a love for good, blooded horses, and many of the officers-even those who can afford no other luxury, perhaps-contrive to have their thoroughbred hunters. Steeple-coursing is a sport equally popular, and serves, unlike the hunt, to amuse them throughout the whole year. It is customary at the school of cavalry to have two grand meets on the steeple-course a year, one in May and one in July, and it would be necessary only for one of our officers to witness them to conceive how much interest and amusement they can afford to the participators. The officers from neighboring garrisons and hundreds of their friends from even Paris-200 miles
220 distant-encourage them by their presence. The horses which enter are usually thoroughbreds ridden by their owners among the officers of the school. Ordinary troop horses, however, sometimes contest, and occasionally with success. The costume worn is either the regular uniform of the different corps or that of the gentleman jockey, with its gaudy colors selected according to the fancy of the owner. The course is one as serious in its difficulties as those ridden over on the regular turf, and requires good riding and skillful jockeying. Indeed, their leisure time of each day for a month or six weeks beforehand is usually devoted by the contestants to training for
230 these races.

The sight of a full field of twelve or fifteen officers stretching away at full speed over a three-mile course covered with ditch, wall and hedge, the gay dress of the riders, the waving handkerchiefs of fair spectators, and the applause of admiring comrades, all this would arouse enthusiasm in the breast of the most soulless spectator, and would cause any of our true cavalymen regret that such manly and professional sport was not encouraged in our own service.

In the different garrisons it is a custom for the captains and
240 subalterns of each squadron to stroll through the stables each morning while smoking their after-breakfast cigar. The horses are critically examined, the sick ones visited, and the features of each particular malady noted and discussed with interest. Besides this the "subs" attend both morning and evening stables, as in our service, though with them they last about twice as long in each case. After the young officer receives his promotion as first lieutenant he is, if he has shown him-self diligent and attentive to duty, sent a second time to Saumur, where he studies a more advanced course than the first. He is made to go back to the ranks and the
250 riding-hall, however, as when a cadet, and his instruction in

equitation he receives entirely fresh. He is, beside this, taught the art of shoeing, and takes a quite extensive course in veterinary surgery. He goes through the infirmary with the instructor each morning, and in his turn examines each horse and enters the result of his examination in his note book. He has to state first, what, in his opinion, is the animal's malady, from what causes it probably proceeds and what treatment is advisable. He then estimates the horse's age and gives an appreciation of his points. On all of these things he is strictly marked. He is also taught here how to
260 competently purchase remount horses. The horses of the school-some nine hundred odd-are assembled for this purpose in requisite numbers, and are told off in squads corresponding to the different geographical departments.

Each officer is then supposed to represent the purchasing officer for a depot in that department, and is required to go through all the paper forms necessary for the purchase, as well as to note down all the qualifications which the horses before him possess for troop purposes; likewise any defects that exist among them, their age, amount of blood, etc. The writer followed the course
270 of these latter officers (the first lieutenants), and it strikes him that it is the most admirable that can be conceived for the forming of a perfect cavalry officer, one who knows every detail of his duty, and who is imbued with a knightly love for his horse, his saber, and his corps.

Such a system of minute instruction, as that just described is, and will, of course, be for many years impossible in our service; but cannot a system of education in the matter of equitation and the horse, upon a smaller scale, combined with the individual effort which corps pride should induce us to make, bring us somewhat nearer
280 perfection in these matters than at present ~ Suppose, for instance, to deal with the first part of the question, a small school of officers and non-commissioned officers, selected, as might be convenient, from the different regiments of cavalry, be established at Leavenworth, either combined with or separated from the main school. Let it be in its general nature a school for the training of troop horses and for the teaching of both officers and men the art of scientific equitation and horse-breaking. Let it be devoted to instruction of this sort exclusively, so that the whole time of its members might be given to these subjects alone. In such a school
290 officers would have not only an opportunity for perfecting themselves in the haute ecole of riding, but they would be able to go through all the necessary processes for creating out of a raw and untrained horse the perfectly-drilled and docile troop charger with

cadenced gaits, graceful action, and stipple movement. They should learn practically and teach to the non-commissioned officers under them the proper manner of subduing by gentle, patient treatment refractory young horses, and they should thoroughly acquire all the details of scientific biting and saddling. Such an institution would cost the Government absolutely nothing beyond the erection of
300 a riding hall (which is almost indispensable) and the time of the officers and men detailed thereat. Who can doubt the advantage the carrying out of this idea would confer upon the service. The officers upon graduating need have no distinctive position as riding masters conferred upon them as in foreign armies; the service might simply be left to benefit from the knowledge they have acquired, and which would be gradually, but surely, disseminated throughout the different regiments as these officers rejoined them.

The object of this article, however, is not the really presumptuous one of making suggestions to the authorities in the
310 army who control these matters, for they are certainly competent to deal with them for themselves it is rather an appeal to my younger brothers in "the service of horse" to let their professional interest be aroused in some of the subjects mentioned above, so as, by taking advantage of such opportunities as are offered them, to develop in our corps that love for equestrianism and mounted sport which alone can render it entirely worthy of outside admiration, or entitle us to be proud of it. It is the custom in our service to think that certain things are impossible or impracticable simply because they have never been done in the past. One often hears that
320 such and such practices are "well enough for European armies, but in our own 'different conditions,' 'frontier service,'" etc., to the end of the chapter. Let us see if we are not running in a groove in many of these matters. At all large posts, and especially Leavenworth, let officers aspire to have good horses; let their training be the pride and pastime of their owners. Let clubs for the promotion of steeple-coursing and the hunt, wherever the latter is practicable, be formed, and let skillful feats of horsemanship and a love for the saddle as a means of pleasure be encouraged. Jockeying should be scientifically learned and practiced in order to ride well over any
330 course. All of the terms of sport of this sort should be familiar to those who wish to be thoroughly accomplished in it. The art of training horses according to their temperament and breed and the nature of the service for which intended, whether for the troop, hunt, or steeple-course, should be made a matter of study, so as to be understood in all its niceties. In fact, a thorough knowledge of the horse should be considered essential from motives dictated by both duty and pleasure. Few officers have any idea how much

amusement can be derived from work of this kind, or how much the
dullest garrison at which there are half a dozen devotees of such
340 sport can be enlivened by it.

Though it may seem but a trifling detail, the etiquette of the
horseman's dress should be observed as strictly as possible. neat
fitting riding trousers and close, stiff-legged top-boots, with the
proper style of spur, should be worn whenever mounted; and it should
be borne in mind that nothing adds so much to the eclat of a race
and the appearance of a hunting field, or to the satisfaction of the
riders themselves, as correctness of costume.

All of the above points-the construction of steeple-courses,
rules for the hunt, dress, etc., may be easily learned from several
350 good manuals existing upon the subject.

There is nothing visionary or impracticable in these
suggestions. Many of the horses now used in the service for troop
purposes may be converted into fair hunters or steeple coursers.
"Riding rings" may take the place of regular halls where the latter
do not exist, and steeple courses can be laid out in the
neighbor-hood of any of our cavalry garrisons. We have both time and
opportunity, and nothing is lacking but the enterprise and interest
necessary to take up and develop those pursuits. Let them be once
started, and their growth is certain. They will finally prove not
360 only gratifying to the officers who engage in them, but they will
inspire a horsemanlike spirit in our cavalry which will do more than
any other thing to perfect the arm and make it in this, as it is in
all else, a credit to the Army of the United States.

S.C. ROBERTSON,
Secoud Lieutenant, First Cavalry.

FORT WALLA WALLA, W.T., January 24, 1883.
ORDNANCE OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, May 7, 1883.
Publication authorized by the SECRETARY OF WAR:
S.V. BENÉT,
Brigadier-General, Chief of Ordnance.

Appendix B Tribe of Erechtheis

Kroll, *An Archive of the Athenian Cavalry, Hesperia* 46, Vol 2 (1977)

TABLE I: TRIBE OF ERECHTHEIS

SERIES	I (Kerameikos)	II (Kerameikos)	III (Kerameikos)	IV (Agora Series A)	V (Kerameikos)	VI (Kerameikos)	VII (Kerameikos)	VIII (Kerameikos)	IX (Agora Series B)
1. Ἀρκέας Ἐθωνιμεύς	πυρὸς Κέρβερος ΠΗΗ			πυρὸς σανφώρας ΠΗ		μέλας δράκων ΧΗΗ		μέλας δράκ ΠΗΗ	
2. Διοσκουρίδης Ἐθωνιμεύς	παρῶς ἀγῆτηρ ΧΗΗ					πυρὸς λίτρα ΧΗΗ	πυρὸς λίτρα ΧΗΗ	πυρὸς λίτρα ΧΗΗ	
3. Διομοκλῆς Κηφισιεύς						μέλας δράκων ΗΙ	π[υρὸς] Κέρβερος [-]	πυρὸς Κέρβερος ΗΗΗΗ	
4. Ἐπαίνετος								πυρὸς ἀσσημο ΗΗΗΗ	
5. Ἐθωνιμεύς	πυρὸς δράκων Χ			πυρὸς πέλυξ ΠΗΗ	πυρὸς πέλυξ ΠΗ		[πυρὸς] δράκ ΧΗΗ	[πυρὸς] δράκ [-]	πυρὸς τρίαν [-]
6. Ἐθωνιμεύς		πυρὸς Χ δράκων		πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΗΗΗΗ				πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΧΗΗ	
7. Θεομήδης Ἀναγυράσιος	λευκὸς Ἄρτεμις Χ				πυρὸς ἀσσημος Χ[ΗΗ]			πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΧΗΗ	
8. Θεομήδης (Ἐθωνιμεύς)	πυρὸς χελιδὼν ΠΗΗ								
9. Τέρων Ἀναγυράσιος	[- - - -] [-]	λευκὸς Χ ἀέτος		πυρὸς Ἀγυεὺς πυρὸς [- - - -] ΠΗΗ	πυρὸς Ἀγυ[ι]εύς ΠΗ			πυρὸς βουκεφά ΗΗΗ	
10. Καλλίας Ἐθωνιμεύς				πυρὸς Ἀγυεὺς πυρὸς [-]			πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ		
11. Κινέας		λευκὸς Π κρατήρ							
12. Κλεοχάρης				πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ	πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ		πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ	πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗΗΗΗ	
13. Νικόμαχος				πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ	πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗ	πυρὸς Χ δράκων			
14. Λαμπτήριος (deme?)	παρῶς ἄλεκτρον ΠΗ								
15. Τιμωνίδης Ἐθωνιμεύς									
16. Φαῖδρος (deme?)	πυρὸς πέλυξ ΠΗΗΗΗ				μέλας Ἀγυεὺς ΠΗΗ			πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΗΗΗ	
17. Φιλοκράτης Ἐθωνιμεύς	πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗΗ							μέλας ἀσσημο ΗΗΗΗ	
18. Φιλοκράτης Κηφισιεύς				πυρὸς κορύνη ΠΗ			πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΠΗΗΗΗΗ	πυρὸς ἀσσημο ΠΗ	
19. Χαρίων Λαμπτήριος	πυρὸς Σείρήνη Χ						πυρὸς ἀσσημος ΧΗ	πυρὸς ἀσσημο ΠΗΗ	

Appendix C Values of Dappled and White Cavalry Horses in Athens (4th and 3rd century B.C.) according to Braun (1970) and Kroll (1977).

P 132 Kroll: nr 81 (IL 1545) Fig 9, Pl 38.

Aristioon Aristioonos leukos asemos timema G (600)

See also 75 (unopened) and nr 44 in the Kerameikos tablets timema: 600

P 118 Kroll: nr 42 (IL 1611 + 1614) Fig 5.

Theomedou Theomedou Anagu poikilos kran time X (1000)

P 135 Kroll: nr 88 (IL 1565) fig 10.

Prootarchou leukos asemos timema HHH (300)

Kerameikos nr 460: same horse 600

P 138 Kroll: nr 108 (Il 1602 + IL 1645) fig 12.

Luandrou Luandrou PI poikilos kranos timema XHH (1200)

P 213 Braun:

nr 338 poikilos X (1000) (Euboulos)

Nr 465 poikilos X (1000) (Euboulos)

P 215 Braun:

Nr 201 leukos artemis X (1000) (Theomedos)

Nr 202 poikilos kranos XHH (1200) (Theomedos)

Nr 203 poikilos kranos X.. (at least 1000) Theomedos)

P 216 Braun:

Nr 215 poikilos drakoon (Theudoros) XHH (1200)

P 217 Braun:

Nr 247 leukos aetos (Hieron) X (1000)

Nr 250 leukos koroone (Kalenikos) X (1000)

Nr 251 leukos koroone (Kallenos) X (1000)

P 218 Braun:

Nr 264: leukos asemos (Kall...) X (1000)

Nr 265: leukos drakoon (Kallipos) 500

Nr 270: poikilos asemos (Kallisthenos) 700

P 219 Braun:

Nr 291: leukos krater (Kineus) 500

P 221 Braun:

Nr 325: leukos koroone (Leosthenes) XHH (1200)

P222 Braun:

Nr 345: poikilos ortyx (Lysippos) 700

P227 Braun:

Nr 156 Leukos krater (Pausanias Oinaios) XHH (1200)

P 228 Braun:

Nr 460: leukos asemos (Protarchos) 600

P 229 Braun:

Nr 479 poikilos drakoon (Spoudias) 1200

P 230 Braun:

Nr 492: poikilos drakoon (Timoth) 1200

Nr 493: poikilos drakoon (Timotheus) 1200

P231 Braun:

Nr 514: leukos ageter (Philiass) 500

P 232 Braun:

Nr 519: leukos aetos (Philistides) 500

P 233 Braun:

Nr 542: leukos nike (Phormion) 700

Nr 543: poikilos drakoon (Phrynichos) X (1000)

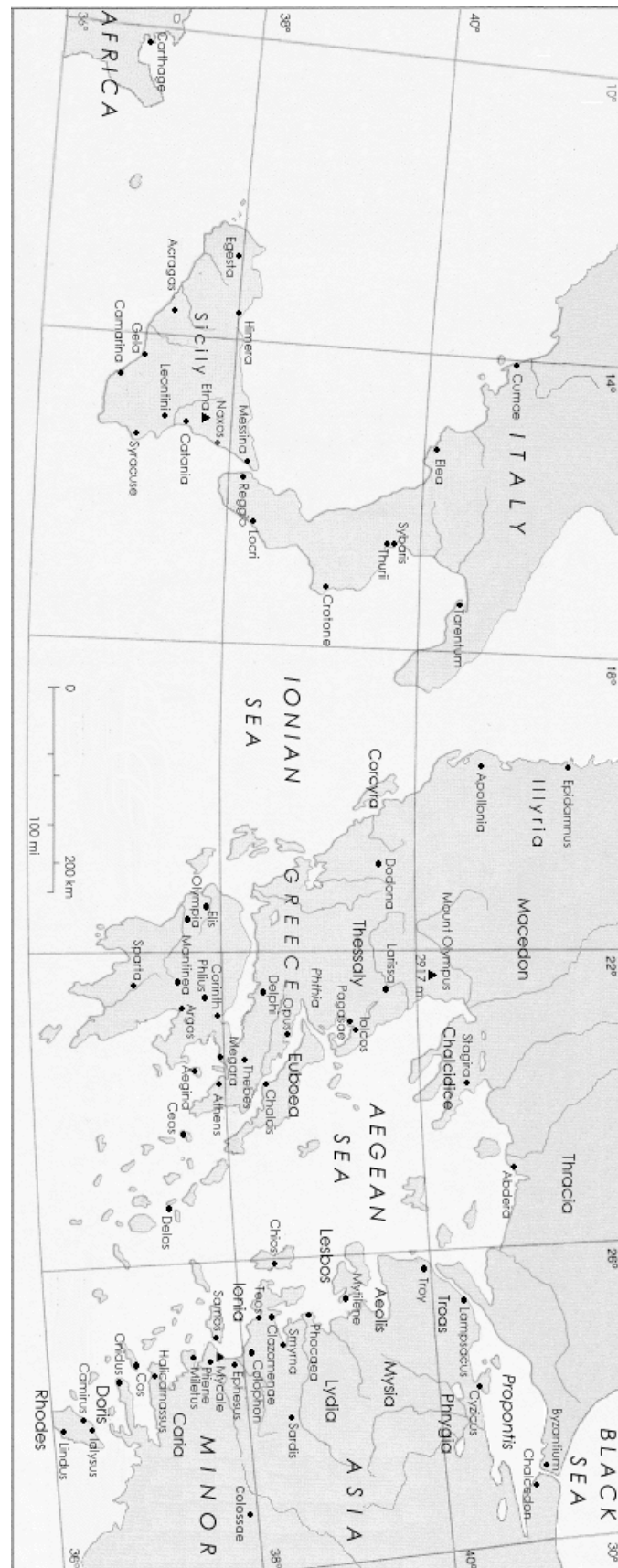
P 235 Braun:

Nr 572: poikilos koroone (Charopinos) 200

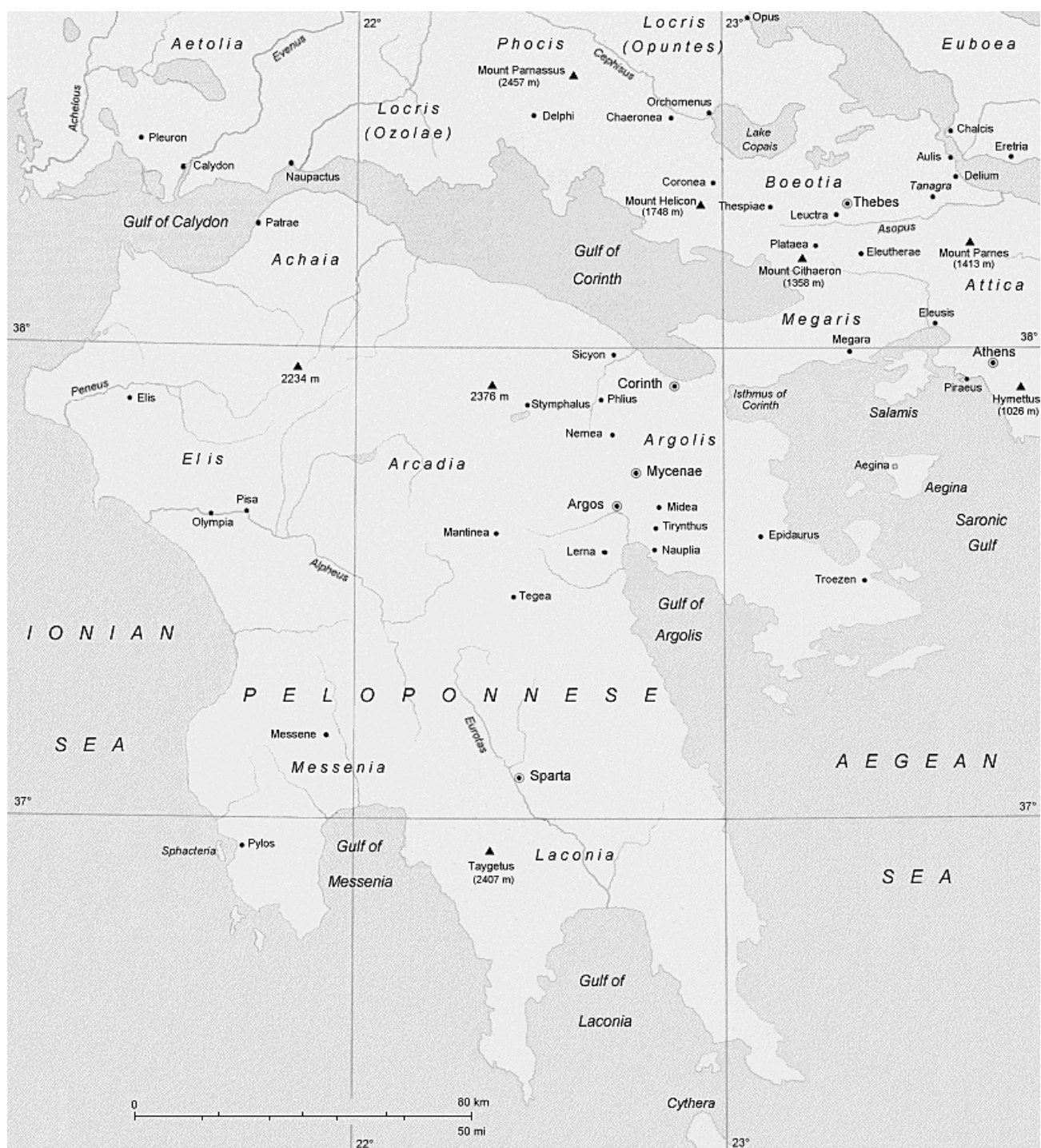
Appendix D Maps of Greece



Map of Ancient Greece



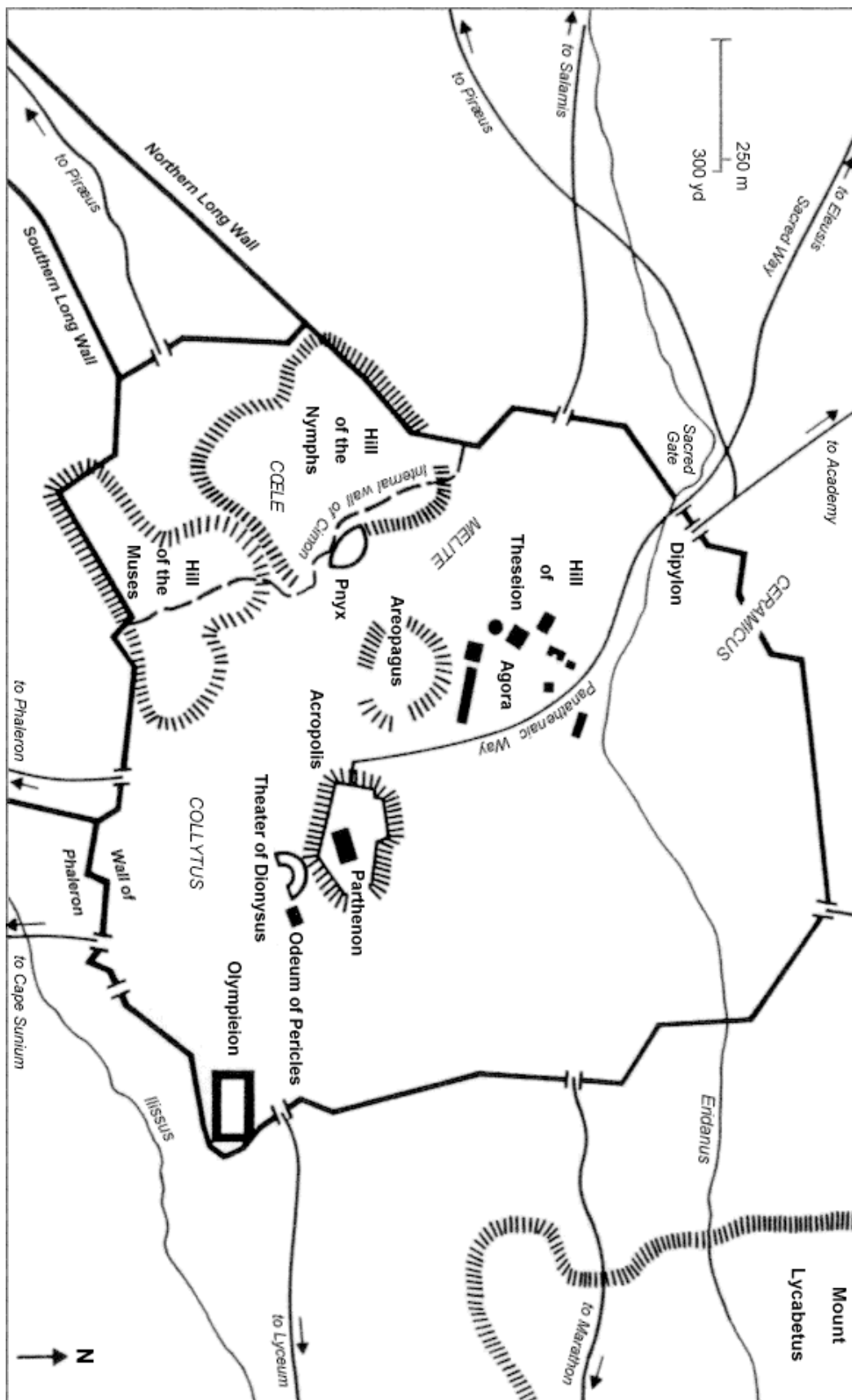
Map of Ancient Greek world including Near East



Map of Central Greece and Peloponnese



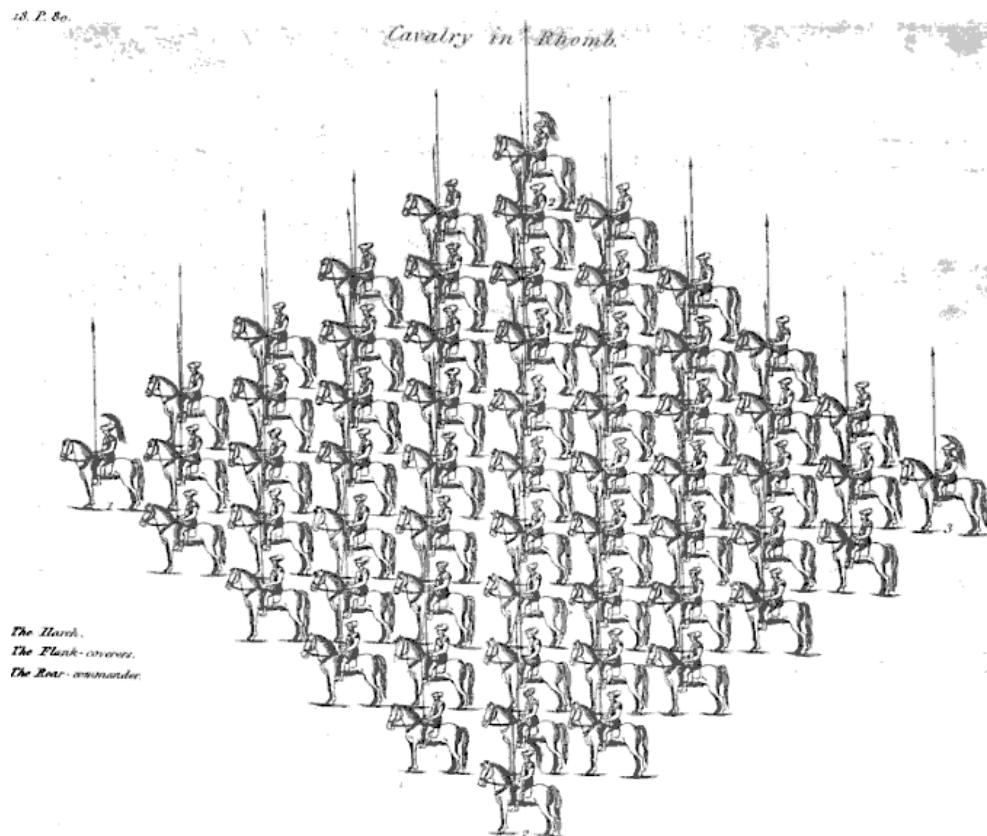
Map of Ancient Attica



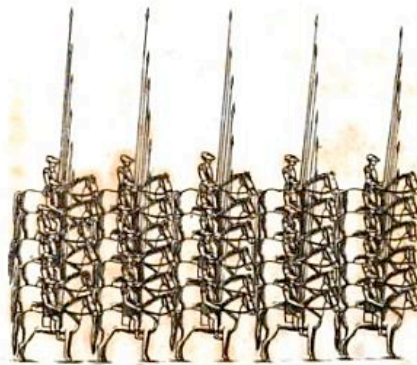
Map of Ancient Athens inside the walls

Appendix E Cavalry formations

From: 'The tactics of Aelian, Comprising the Military System of the Grecians', with a preliminary discourse by Henry Augustus Viscount Dillon (London 1814)

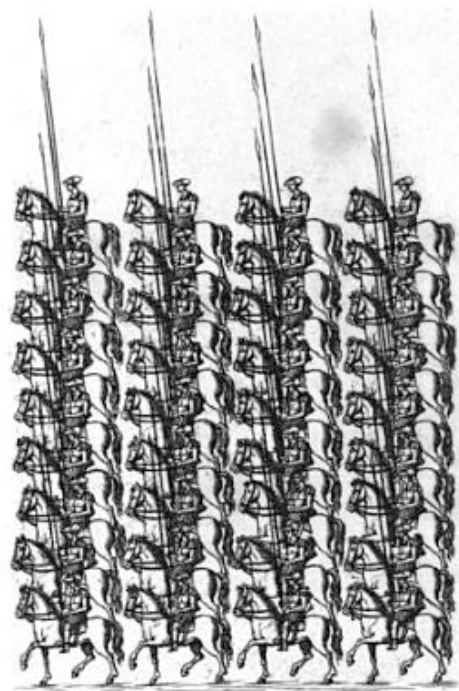


The rhomboid formation as described by Aelianus Tacticus



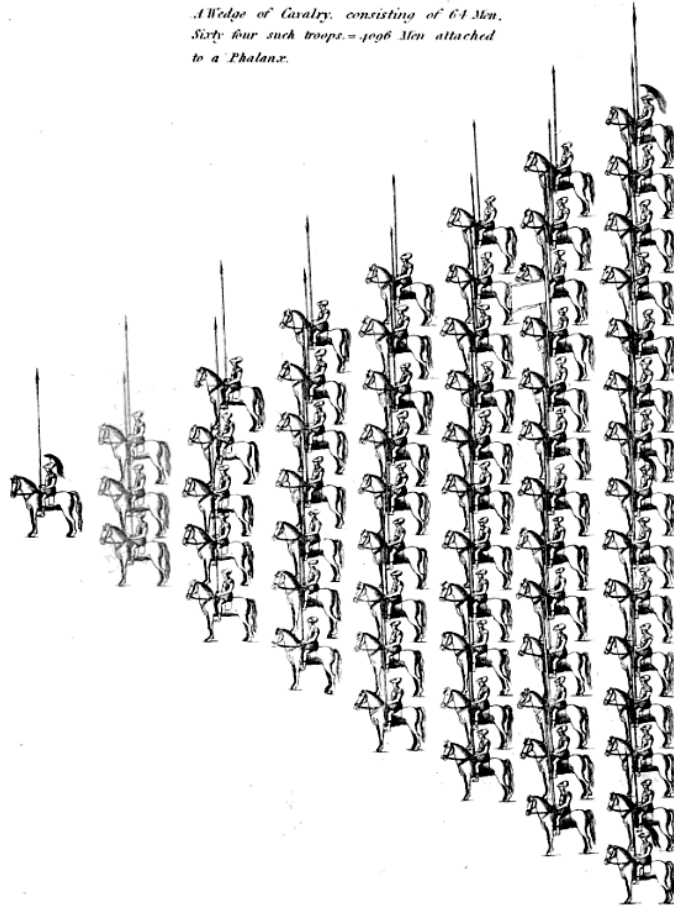
*The Squadron termed
Heteromekes.*

The *heteromekes* square formation (rectangle) as described by Aelianus Tacticus

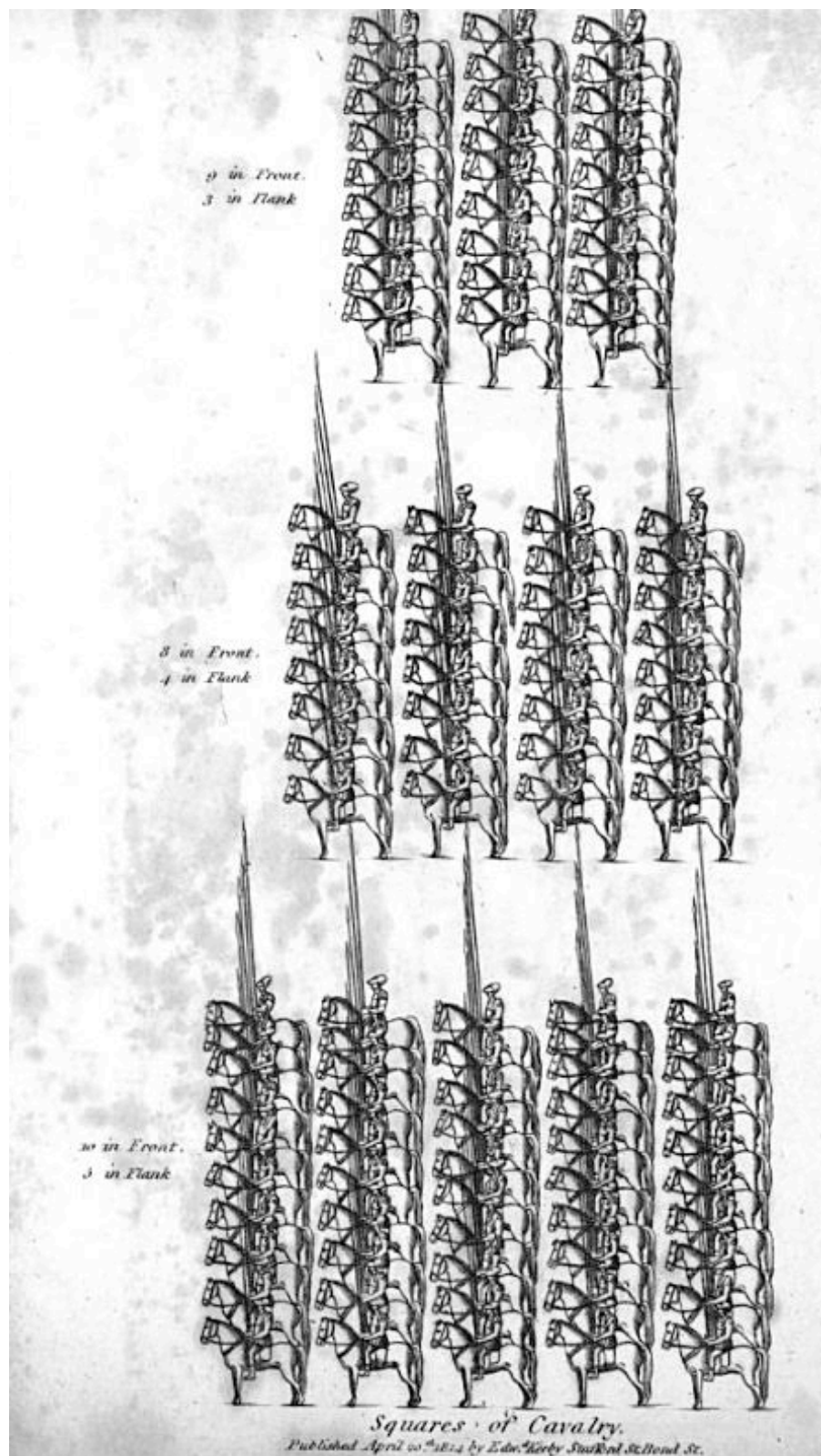


the tetragonal square formation as described by Aelianus Tacticus

*A Wedge of Cavalry, consisting of 64 Men.
Sixty four such troops = 4096 Men attached
to a Phalanx.*



wedge formation as described by Aelianus Tacticus



different square formations as described by Aelianus Tacticus

Hollow square infantry formation as used by Agesilaus

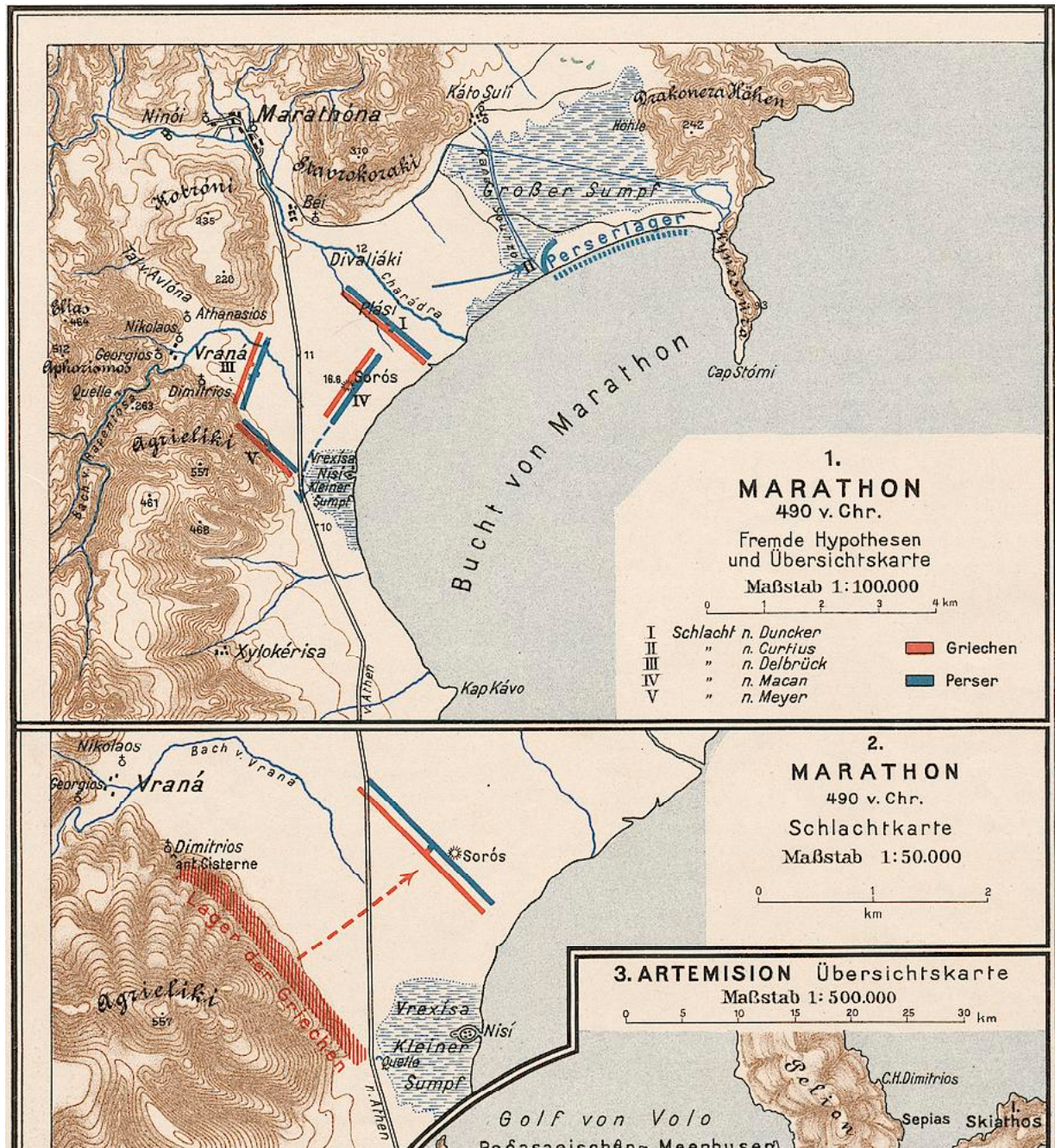


‘Embolon’ Formation or Deepened Phalanx of Epaminondas

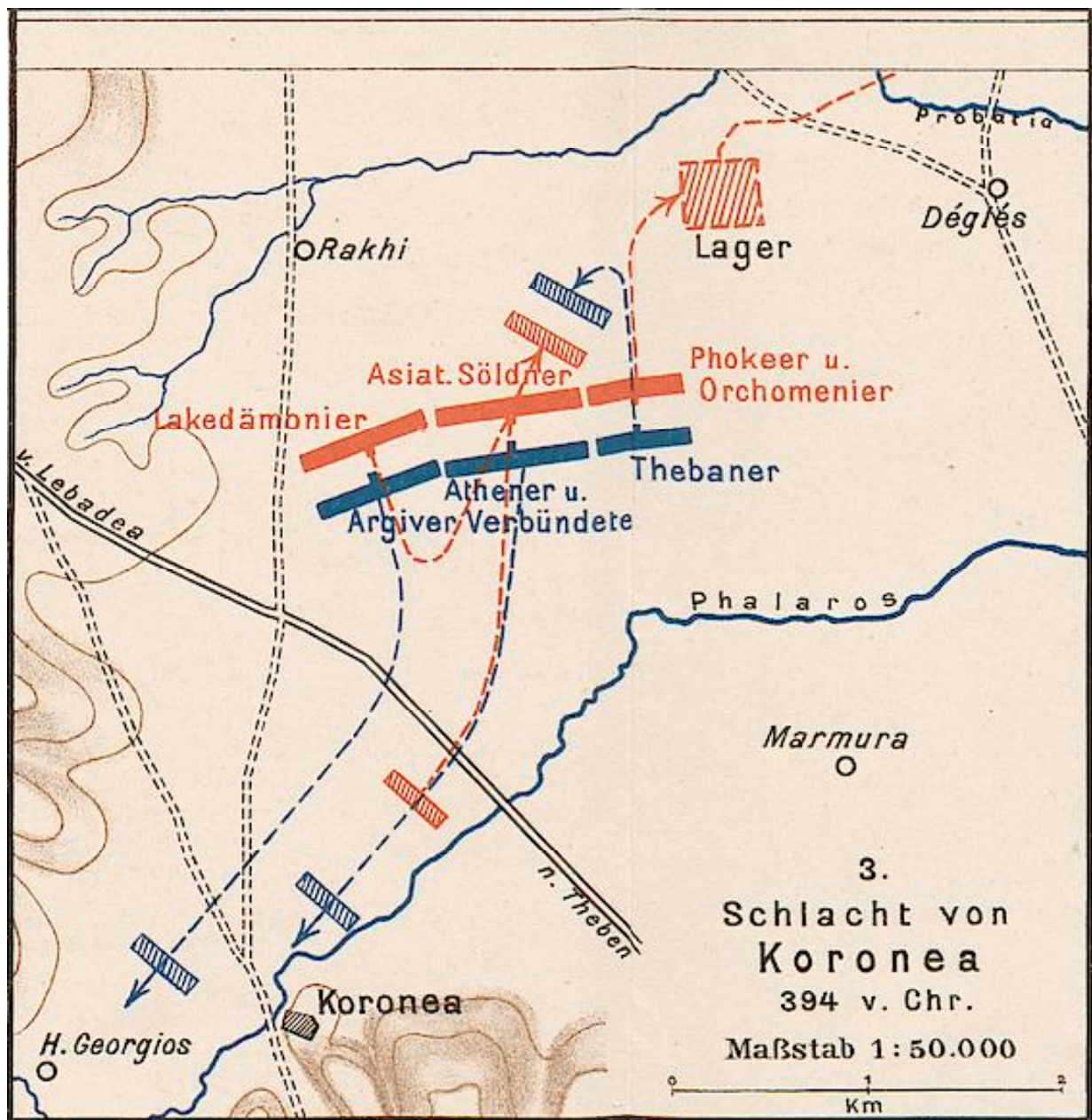


This picture shows how Epaminondas lead his troops in a deepened phalanx with a smaller front head on towards the enemy lines. He used them as a wedge or ‘embolon’ in order to split up the large front. With his cavalry he had intermingled ‘hamippoi’ (heavy armed footsoldiers) to surprise the enemy’s cavalry. According to Xenophon Epaminondas did not care where he hit the enemy lines, because he figured that when he could break the line, he would have won the battle all together. He kept the other lochoi behind the first deepened phalanx to lure the enemy’s other wing into attack. (Diodorus Siculus 15.55) Hence the expression ‘oblique’ phalanx.

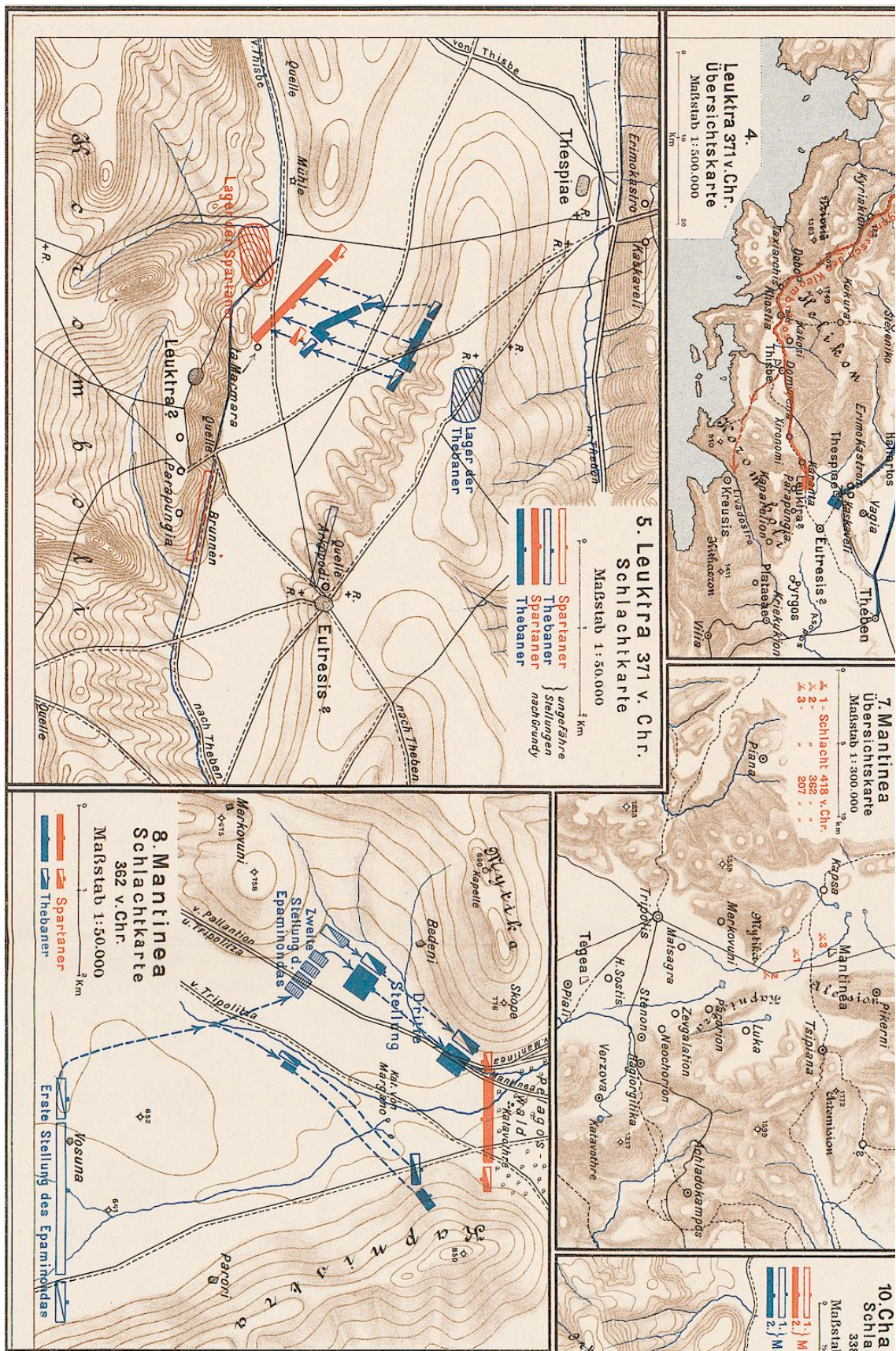
Appendix F Battle plans



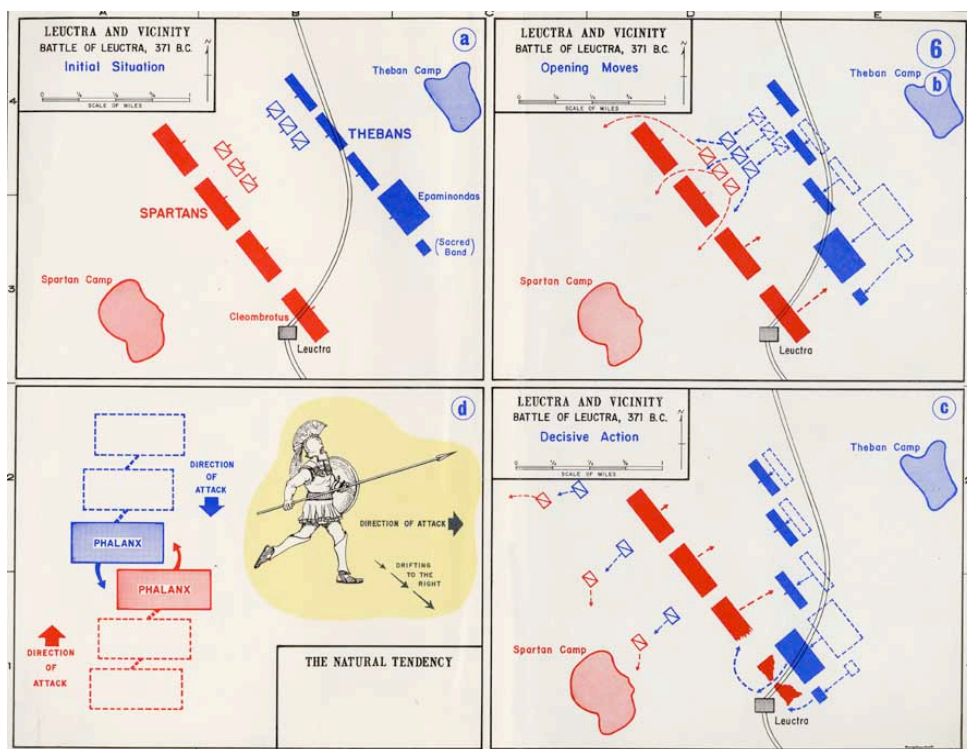
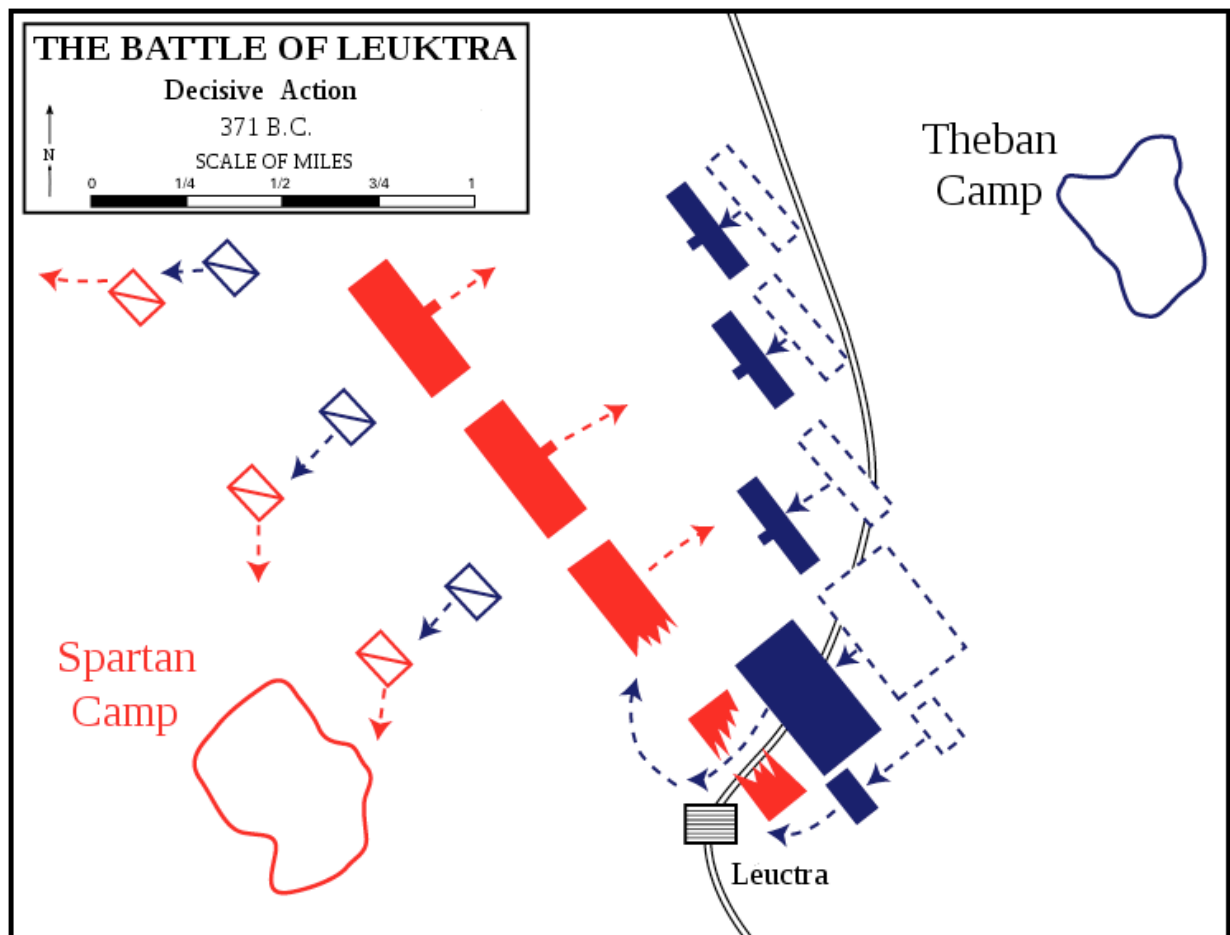
Plans of Marathon, Kromayer and Veith, Schlachtenatlas, Leipzig 1929



Battle Plan of Coronea (394 BC) of Agesilaus II with Xenophon against the Athenians and Thebans



Leuctra (371) and Mantinea (362), Kromayer and Veith, Schlachtenatlas Leipzig 1929



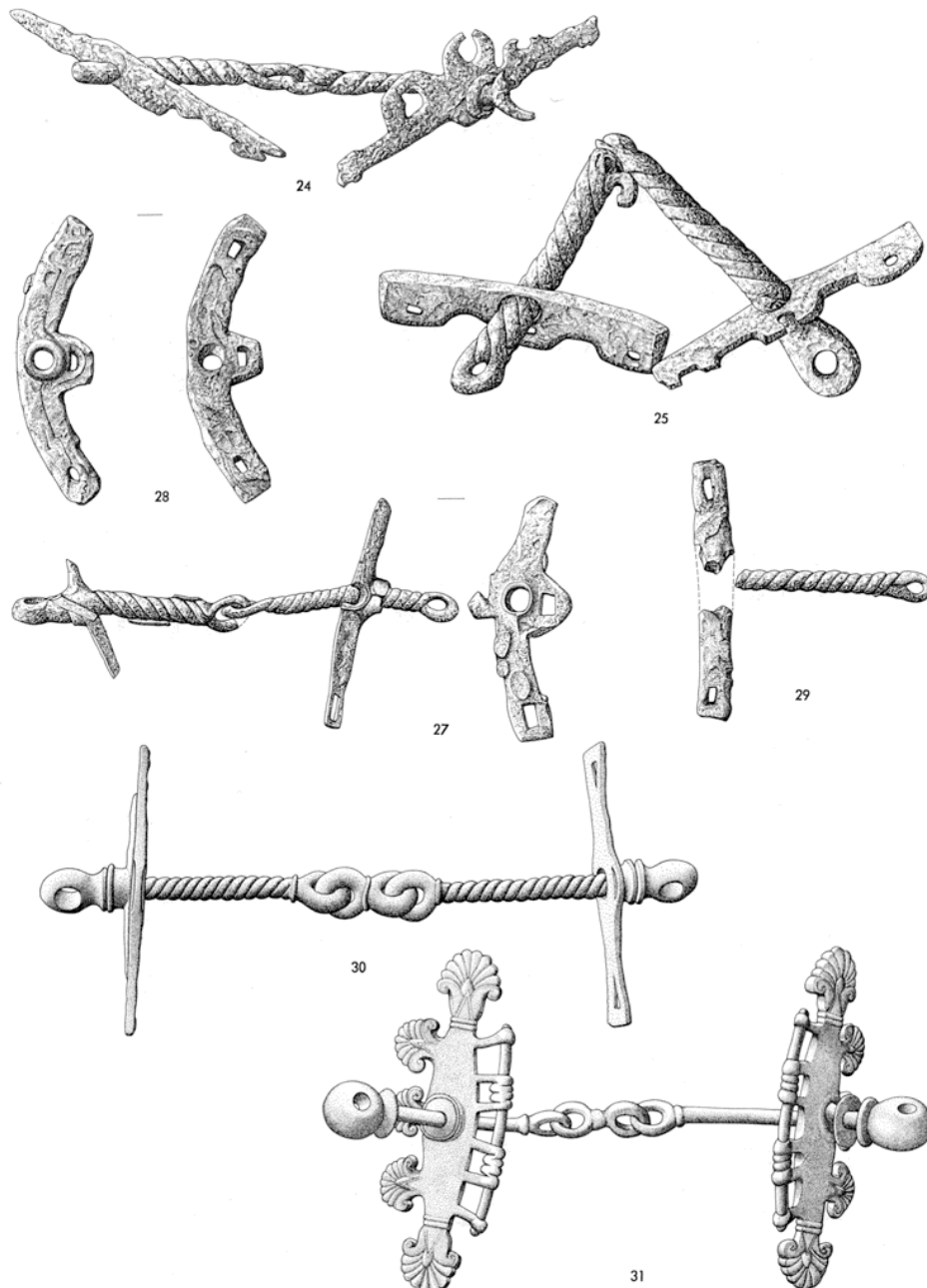
Leuctra (371 BC), [wikipedia.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Leuctra)

Appendix G Horsebridles

Ancient Greek horsebridles (*H. Donder, Zaumzeug in Griechenland und Cypern, 1980*)

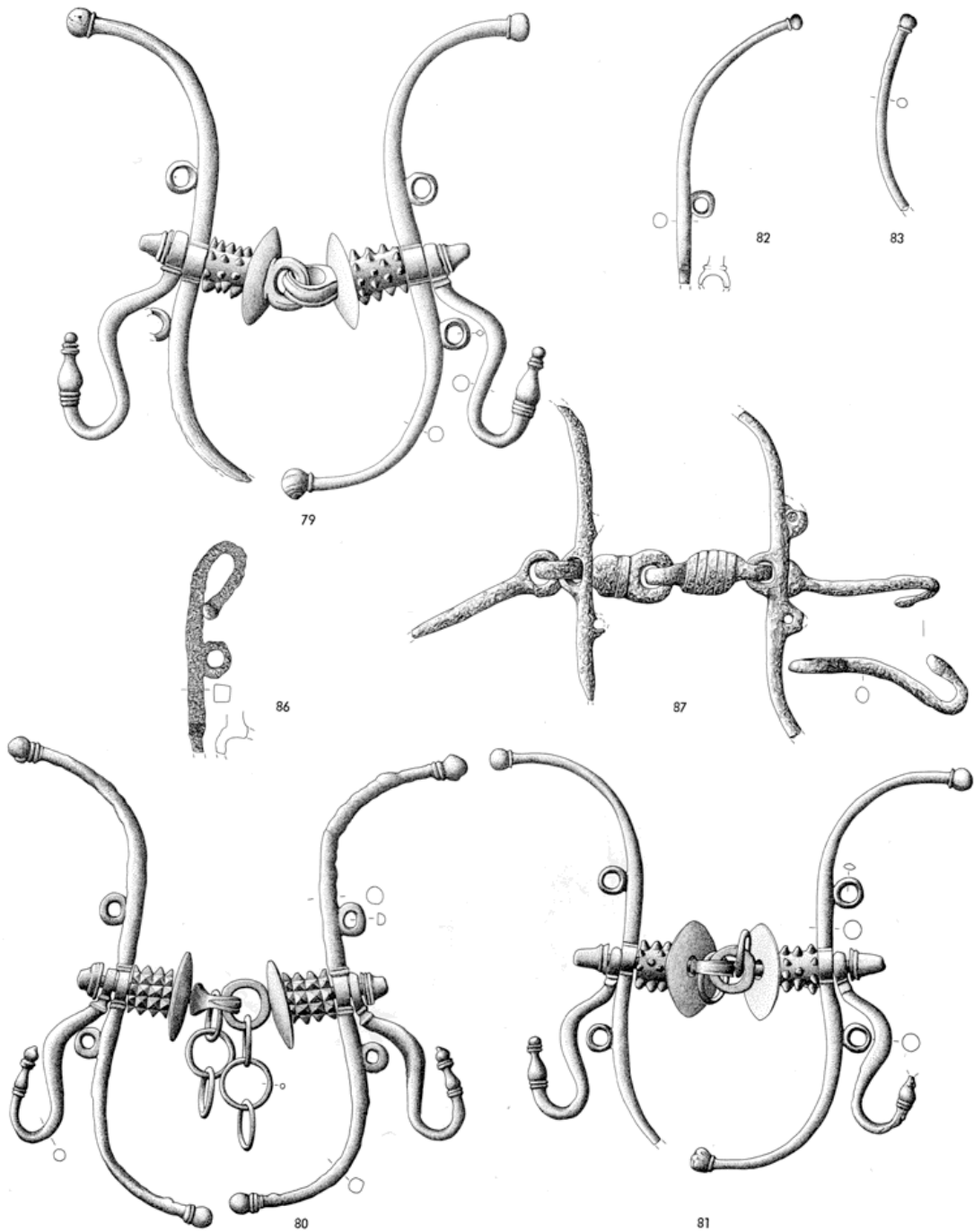
Trensen vom Typ I, Var. C (24. 25); Var. D (27-29); Typ I wohl zugehörig (30-32)

TAFEL 5



24. 25. 32 Salamis, Nekropole, Gr. 79. – 27-29 Palaepaphos, aus den Gräbern 7 und 8 (?). – 30 Curium. – 31 Cypern. – (24. 25. 27-29. 32 nach Karageorghis; 30 nach Foto Metr. Mus. New York; 31 nach Gjerstad).

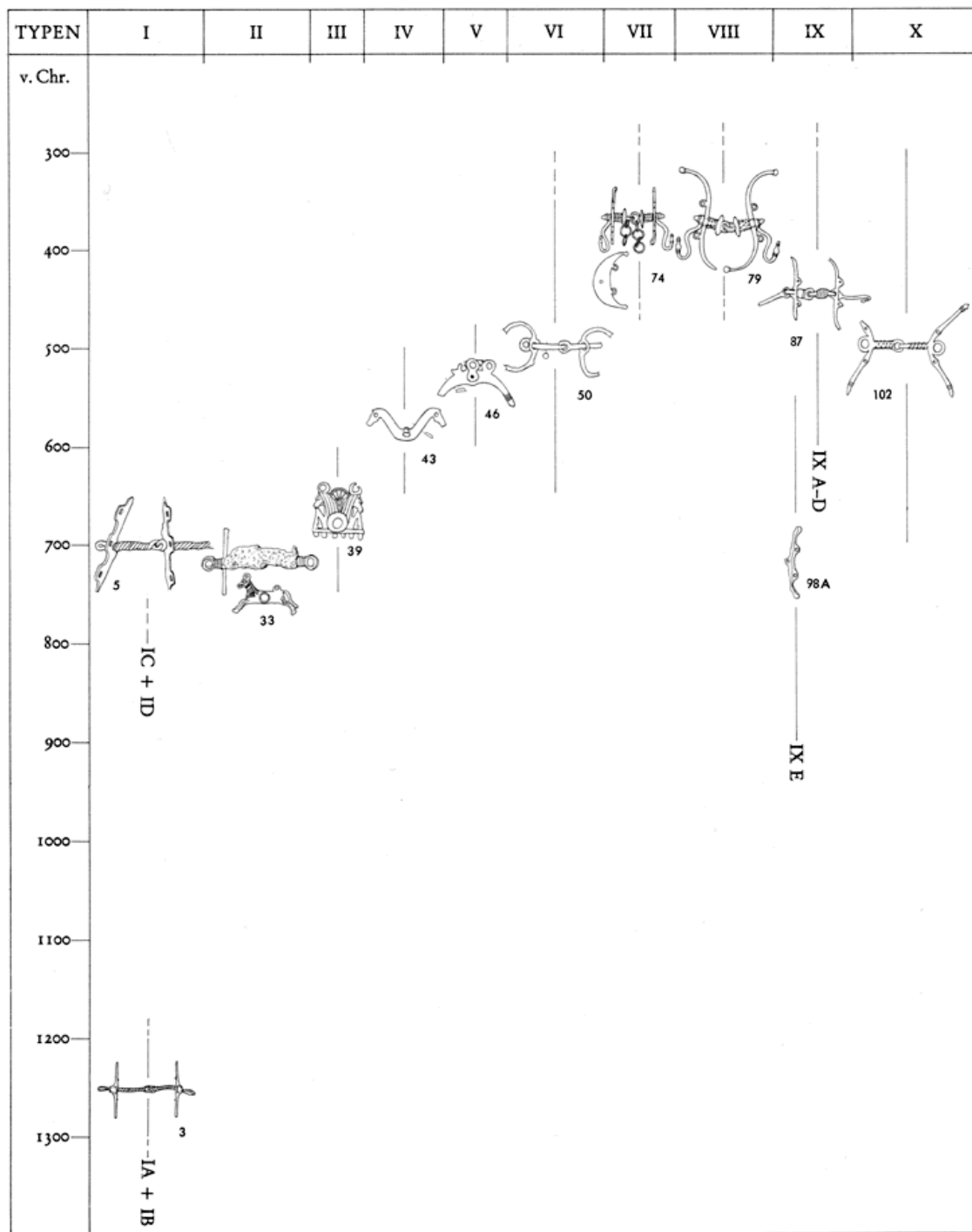
M. 1 : 3



79, 83 Fundort unbekannt. – 80 Theben (?). – 81 Korinth. – 82. Olynth, Südhügel. – 86 Olynth, Nordhügel. – 87 Olympia.
(80 nach Kopie RGZM.).

M. 1 : 3

Horsebit described by Xenophon in 'On Horsemanship 10'



Chronologische Stellung der in Griechenland und Cyprien vorkommenden Tressen.

Chronological record of Greek bits (H. Donder 1980)

Modern bridles



Left: a police or cavalry curb bit

Right: a cavalry pelham bit



left: double bridle with curb and snaffle

right: snaffle bit

Appendix H Timeline of Greek warfare

546 BC	Peisistratus becomes tyrant of Athens
527 BC	Peisistratos dies. His sons become tyrants of Athens
512 BC	Battle at Phaleron (Sparta attacks Athens), Athens is freed of tyranny; start of democracy at Athens.
499 BC	Ionian revolt
494 BC	Persians defeat the Ionian revolt
497 – 479 BC	Persian Wars
490 BC	Battle at Marathon; Athens wins
479 BC	Battle at Thermopylae; Battle at Salamis; Battle at Plataeae
<i>Start Classical Period at Athens</i>	
477 BC	Athens forms an Empire with the Delian League
461 – 445 BC	First Peloponnesian War (Athens, Sparta, Boeotia)
460 – 429 BC	Pericles; Golden Era of Athens
446/445 BC	Thirty Year Peace Treaty between Sparta and Athens
431 – 404 BC	Second Peloponnesian War
431 – 421 BC	Archidamian War
424 BC	Battle at Delium
421 BC	Peace of Nicias

418 BC	Battle at Mantinea
415 – 413 BC	Sicilian Expedition; Syracuse defeats Athens
406 BC	Spartan commander Lysander wins Battle at Notium
404 BC	Athens defeated by Sparta; surrender to Sparta
404 BC	Thirty Tyrants rule Athens supported by cavalry class
403 BC	Democracy restored in Athens; cavalry suffers
401 BC	Xenophon, Proxenus and Agesilaus join Cyrus the Younger to fight Artaxerxes II in Persia. Battle at Cynaxa. Cyrus dies. Xenophon leads 10,000 Greek mercenaries back to Greece (Anabasis).
400 BC	Wars between Sparta and Persia
399 BC	Agesilaus II becomes King of Sparta
399 – 395 BC	Agesilaus against Persia
395 – 387 BC	Corinthian War (Sparta against Athens, Thebes and Argos, backed by Persia)
394 BC	Spartan Agesilaus II wins against Thebes and Athens at Coronea, Xenophon fights with him in this battle.
391 BC	Athenian Iphicrates wins a battle at Lechaeum, near Corinth, against Agesilaus
387 BC	King's Peace between Persia, Sparta and Athens, also known as Peace of Antalcidas or Common Peace

386 BC	Spartans sack Mantinea
382 BC	Spartans conquer the citadel of Thebes
379 BC	Thebans regained their city; Second Athenian League
378 BC	Boeotian War
376 BC	Sparta defeated by Second Athenian League at Naxos
375 BC	Agésilas fights Battle at Tegyra against Thebes led by Epaminondas, Thebes wins
375 BC	Renewal of the King's Peace
373 BC	Plataeae attacked by Boeotians
371 BC	Peace of Callias; Battle at Leuctra, Epaminondas defeats Agésilas again
370 BC	First Theban invasion of the Peloponnese
369 BC	Second Theban invasion of the Peloponnese
368 BC	Agésilas II declines from military service; his son Archidamus wins the Tearless Battle in Arcadia
366 BC	Thebes seizes Oropus
364 BC	Thebes destroys Orchomenus; Battle at Cynoscephalae, Thebans against Thessalians; Pelopidas dies. Thessalians win.
363 BC	Epaminondas wins against Alexander of Thessaly
362 BC	Battle at Mantinea, Epaminondas defeats Sparta; Epaminondas dies; peace ensues between Greek cities, except Sparta.

361 BC	Archidamus III, son of Agesilaus II, becomes King of Sparta.
360 BC	Agesilaus II dies
355 BC	Xenophon dies
350 BC	Rise of Macedonian phalanx, Philip of Macedon is said to have been a pupil of Epaminondas in tactics

Appendix I Timeline Military Horsemanship

1400 BC	Kikkuli, famous horsetrainer in Mittanni. He wrote a treatise on horsetraining in Hittite.
360 BC	Xenophon. He wrote a treatise on both horsemanship and cavalry training.
200 BC	Philopoemen. The 'last great' cavalry commander of Greece, according to Polybius and Plutarch.
150 BC	Polybius. Roman cavalry commander. He wrote a treatise on Philopoemen, on cavalry and infantry tactics, on the Numantine war.
100 AD	Lucius Flavius Arrianus Xenophon. He wrote a treatise on infantry and cavalry tactics.
200 AD	Aelianus Tacticus. He wrote an extensive work on 'Tactical Arrays of the Greeks' about Hellenistic tactics, originating of Macedonian tactics.
430 AD	Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus. A Roman horseman who wrote a treatise both on military matters as on horse medicine.
1250 AD	Cilician manuscript on cavalry horse training and medicine.
1438 AD	Dom Duarte. King of Portugal. He wrote a treatise on knightly horsemanship and jousting.
1550 AD	Federico Grisone, Naples. Founder of Riding Academy. Published 'Gli Ordini di Cavalcare' or 'The Rules of Horsemanship'.
1550 AD	Pignatelli, riding master in Naples. Pupil of Grisone. Rediscovered Xenophon.

1560 AD	Thomas Blundeville translates Federice Grisone and Xenophon. First English publication on horsetraining.
1600 AD	Antoine de Pluvinel, pupil of Grisone, spreads the riding principles of Grisone to France. He publishes <i>L'Instruction du Roy en l'exercice de monter à cheval</i> . He works on the side movements such as shoulder-in, and high collection exercises like levade. Like Xenophon he advocates gentle riding so that the horse finds pleasure in being ridden.
1650 AD	William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle. He wrote a treatise on horsetraining advocating voltes and draw reins to flex the horse.
1700 AD	François Robichon de La Guérinière. Director of the Académie d'équitation in Caen, the academy of Pluvinel. In 1733 he published <i>L'École de Cavalerie</i> , "The School of Horsemanship". He perfected the shoulder-in exercise of Pluvinel, he discovered the 'flying changes' and the 'counter-canter'.
1850 AD	Louis Seeger. German horsetrainer who was highly influenced by Guérinière. Published <i>System der Reitkunst</i> . He also published <i>Herr Baucher und seine Künste - Ein ernstes Wort an Deutschlands Reiter</i> , "Monsieur Baucher and his Methods", in which he criticized the training techniques of François Baucher, after riding several horses trained by Baucher.
1850 AD	François Baucher. He wrote several works on horsemanship. His aim was to dominate the horse in every aspect and to 'annul the instinctive forces of the horse'. He did this by bringing the head of the horse towards its chest and by using spurs and hands excessively. His method made the horses go on the forehand. His method is used in modern

day dressage, known as rollkur or LDR or hyperflexion. Classical trained riders oppose to this as this goes against every classical principle and it produces horses which lack energy and impulsion with the hindlegs dragging out behind them and stiff hindlegs. According to Seeger these horses were difficult to sit, dead to the leg, moved flat, and travelled on the forehand.

Unsurprisingly, they could not take up even contact with the reins, and had great difficulty bending the joints of their hind legs, swishing their tail in displeasure when asked. They were also very stiff at the canter, including during the one-tempi flying changes, and could not collect, having a canter more hopping than a jumping motion. The piaffe was very incorrect, with stiff hind legs and the horses stepping sideways or backwards, the forelegs having little action since the horse was on the forehand, and the hind legs having most the action. The passage was stiff, instead of elastic and springy, and Baucher had to use a great deal of leg, spur, and whip to keep the horse going (contrary to the correct way, where the rider appears to be doing nothing at all). The horses would throw themselves around in the pirouette, instead of easily turning around.

(source: wikipedia.com)

1830 AD

Gustav Steinbrecht, pupil of Seeger and strong opposer of Baucher. He wrote one of the most influential works on classical horsetraining today: *Das Gymnasium des Pferdes*. First published in 1886.

1890 AD

James Fillis publishes 'Breaking and Riding'. Fillis is acknowledged as one of the greatest trainers. He opposed Baucher, although at first he was trained by Baucher.

1937 AD

Van Reede, Rijden en Africhten. Work on military horsemanship, based on Fillis and Steinbrecht.

1898 – 1973 AD

Alois Podhajsky, Director of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. Writer of a number of books on classical horsemanship.

1937 – 1999 AD

Dr Reiner Klimke, trained by Paul Stecken. Dressagerider who trained his horses based on principles of classical training. He won several gold olympic medals and world and european championships. His horses Ahlerich, Mehmed and Biotop are worldfamous. Paul Stecken is one of the trainers of Annelies' dressage trainer.

Appendix J Classical Dressage Explained

Collection may refer to collected gaits. Collection requires greater muscular strength, so must be advanced upon slowly. When in a collected gait, the stride length should shorten, and the stride should increase in energy and activity.

When a horse collects, more weight moves to the hindquarters. Collection is natural for horses and is often seen during pasture play. A collected horse is able to move more freely. The joints of the hind limbs have greater flexion, allowing the horse to lower the hindquarters, bringing the hind legs further under the body, and lighten and lift the forehand. In essence, collection is the horse's ability to move its centre of gravity to the rear.



Shoulder in, an exercise which loosens the shoulders in order to get the horse more manoeuvrable



Half-pass, an exercise to enhance the horse's manoeuvrability sideways



Conversano in 'working trot'. Here the horse is using its hind legs to propel rather than carry itself. Its frame is moving more forward (propulsion) than upward and looks 'extended'.



Conversano in a collected trot. Here the horse is carrying itself more on its hind legs. Slight elevation at the front. To the eye the horse's frame looks 'shorter'. Self-carriage means more balance, as the horse brings his hind legs closer to its point-of-gravity. Here the right hind leg is placed more 'under the body' in comparison with the working trot.

Eventually self-carriage and collection will result in the highest form of collection and balance: canter pirouette, piaffe, passage and the airs above the ground.



Canter pirouette, an exercise which learns the horse to pivot



Passage. Conversano is moving upwards instead of forwards. High self-carriage and elevation at the front.



Conversano in a piaffe.

The apex of collection is the levade, in which the horse takes on all weight on the hind quarters. The preliminary exercise for the levade is the piaffe which should free the shoulders by bringing the hind legs further under the body.



Head rider of the Spanish Riding School in a Courbette, one of the Airs above the Ground. Here the rider sits without stirrups



Longe lessons without stirrups at the Spanish Riding School

Natural horsemanship



Assyrian archer (left) and Hungarian archer (right).

Appendix K Horse builds



Conversano, a typical Baroque Lipizzaner horse. A horse with a broad chest and short legs. Powerful haunches. Very capable of collection.



Lipizzaner



Thoroughbred

The photos illustrate the difference between a horse with a naturally 'standing' neck and a horse with a naturally 'hanging' neck. The first horse will be easy to collect (it is already more balanced) whereas the second horse is difficult to collect because of all the weight placed on its shoulders.

Left picture: Conversano Romania II R

Right picture: Reflex

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Summary

Griekenland had een ontwikkeling in de oorlogsvoering van de cavalerie vanaf de archaïsche periode (800 – 490 voor Christus) tot het begin van de Macedonische overheersing in ongeveer 350 voor Christus. In de archaische periode was het belangrijkste doel in de oorlogen het verdedigen van grenzen en het houden van patrouilles. In deze tijd werd de cavalerie niet ingezet op het slagveld, maar ten behoeve van foerageren, het hinderen van de vijand, het vernietigen van het land rondom een stad en om de terugtrekkende infanterie te achtervolgen.

Dit alles veranderde toen de Perzen zich begonnen te interesseren om Griekenland te veroveren. Athene en Sparta werden geconfronteerd met een landoorlog op verschillende fronten en moesten strijden tegen een cavalerie die streed met technieken die tot nu toe onbekend waren. Athene had tot op dat moment een cavalerie die geschikt was voor de taken zoals hierboven beschreven. Dit wordt in dit proefschrift aangeduid als een naucrarie cavalerie, een Atheense term.

De Perzen vochten vanaf grote afstand met grote aantallen cavalerie van voornamelijk boogschutters te paard, en waren niet in staat om de Atheense infanterie te bestrijden. De Atheners beseften al snel na de Perzische oorlogen dat zij hun cavalerie aantal dienden te verhogen, niet om een groot cavalerie regiment te vormen, maar eerder ten behoeve van de inzet van meer naucraries tegelijk. Er was dan ook weinig verandering in de technieken van de oorlogsvoering bij de Grieken onderling. De Atheense cavalerie had ook weinig succes in Sicilië en werden verrast door de Siciliaanse cavalerie, die, in

tegenstelling tot de meest machtige slagcavalerie van Griekenland, de Thessalische cavalerie, wel bereid was om de hoplieten in slaglinie aan te vallen.

Thessalië had een enorme cavalerie die het ingezet kon worden op het slagveld. Maar deze ruiters waren bijzonder goed in verrassingsaanvallen op hoplieten die nog niet in slagorde stonden of bij het achtervolgen en afmaken van zich terugtrekkende infanteristen. Zij vielen hoplieten die zich in slagorde bevonden niet aan. De landstreek Boeotië had zijn eigen cavalerie en in de Perzische Oorlogen kozen zij de zijde van de Perzen. De Boeotianen ondersteunden de Perzen met hun .

Gedurende de klassieke periode bleef er voortdurend onrust, omdat Athene, Sparta en Thebe onder elkaar voortdurend met elkaar in de clinch lagen om de hegemonie in het Griekse deel van de Middellandse Zee. Hun niveau van tactiek en krijgskunde verbeterde nu gedurende de jaren, omdat ze meer en meer op het vasteland oorlog voerden. De cavalerie had een steeds belangrijkere rol in deze landoorlogen. De Grieken konden dus hun cavalerietactiek en gevechtscavalerie ontwikkelen in deze periode. Dit betekende een afwijking van de standaardtaken zoals fourageren, achtervolgen en hinderen van infanterie, waar de cavalerie tot nu toe aan gewend was.

Boeotië had *hamippoi* ontwikkeld, dit waren hoplieten die samen met de cavalerie werkten. Deze werden ingezet op het slagveld al in 419 of 418 voor Christus en waren zeer effectief. De koning van Sparta, Agesilaus II, lijkt te zijn begonnen met het inzetten van infanterie en cavalerie samen op het slagveld rond 395 voor Christus, volgens Xenophon, na het ontdekken tijdens zijn campagne in Caria in Klein-Azië, dat de infanterie alleen niet voldoende zou

zijn tegen de Perzische cavalerie. Hij lijkt ook de uitvinder te zijn van de ‘uitgeholde vierkantsformatie’, welke hij met succes gebruikte tegen de Thessaliërs in de Slag bij Coronea in 394 voor Christus.

In de Slag bij Tegyra (375 voor Christus), Leuctra (371 BC) en daarna in de Slag om Mantinea (362 vC), zette de generaal van Thebe, Epaminondas, zijn cavalerie, infanterie en *hamippoi* in een dichte vierkante formatie. Hij versloeg Agesilaus op het slagveld.

Epaminondas had goed getrainde mannen onder zijn leiding, die heel goed waren in het omzetten van zijn tactische inzicht in actie op het slagveld en het vormen van formaties van zowel de cavalerie en infanterie, waardoor het mogelijk was om meerdere beslissende overwinningen te behalen tegen Sparta en Athene. De vierkantsformatie begon gezien te worden op het slagveld. Thebe versloeg in deze periode Sparta en Athene en liet de Griekse staten in verwarring achter. Een machtsvacuüm ontstond.

Xenophon analyseerde deze situatie zorgvuldig en probeerde de Atheners zover te krijgen om iets te doen aan het machtsvacuüm dat was ontstaan na de slag van Mantinea. Xenophon begreep hoe belangrijk het zou worden om te vechten in formatie op het slagveld en om de cavalerie en de infanterie in te zetten als een tactische eenheid. De Atheners moesten dit erkennen en stoppen met hun *ad hoc* training van beide onderdelen.

Xenophon herkende ook het belang van discipline en autoriteit binnen het leger. Hij beschreef hoe twijfels over de capaciteit van een commandant bij de manschappen een negatieve invloed kunnen hebben op de algemene werking van het leger en dat de leiding eigenlijk alleen zou moeten worden gedragen door mensen die deskundig zijn. Als er geen vertrouwen is in een commandant, worden bevelen niet goed uitgevoerd of zelfs genegeerd en de soldaten of de

ruiters zullen niet weten waar ze aan toe zijn. Dit kan fataal zijn op het slagveld en tijdens een mars.

Hij bundelde al zijn expertise, omdat hij het nodig vond om Athene te wijzen op het belang van de cavalerie en het verwerven van *horsemanship*. Alle aspecten van *horsemanship* zijn belangrijk voor het functioneren van de cavalerie, vooral als het diens taak is om als een strijdcavalerie te vechten in formatie. De inspanningen van de cavalerie als een gevechtseenheid zullen slagen of mislukken, afhankelijk van het niveau van de opleiding van zowel paard als ruiter. Paarden moeten worden voorbereid op alle mogelijke situaties, zoals een plotselinge vijandelijke aanval waarbij terugtrekken nodig is, dode lichamen, het springen over greppels, het maken van wendingen en pirouettes en diverse aanval manoeuvres. Bovendien moeten de paarden nauw samenwerken met hun ruiters en met hen een eenheid vormen. De ruiters moeten hun paarden te trainen zodat ze in staat zijn om ontberingen te doorstaan en vertrouwen hebben in hun ruiters, die op hun beurt een goed begrip van snelheid, opstelling en cavalerietactiek nodig hebben.

Horsemanship is een vaardigheid die niet alleen het berijden van een paard, maar ook grondige kennis van paarden, rassen, hun karakter, bouw, training, het gebruik van hoofdstellen, et cetera, omvat. Met betrekking tot de ruiter vraagt dit om een grondige kennis van wapens, oefeningen, formaties en tactieken cavalerie.

De cavaleriecommandant moet hierin superieur zijn aan zijn ondergeschikten, omdat hij anders zijn leidinggevende positie niet kan waarmaken. Hij moet dan ook een superieure ruiter zijn, beter in cavalerietactiek en in staat zijn om zijn

mannen goed op te leiden. Daarnaast moet hij een goed strategisch inzicht hebben om succesvol te zijn in de oorlog en op het slagveld.

Wanneer een cavalerie geen hoog niveau van horsemanship heeft, kan cavalerie weliswaar succesvol zijn in kleine schermutselingen, maar als deze wordt geconfronteerd met een cavalerie op het slagveld die wordt ingezet als tactisch en strategisch wapen, zal een slecht opgeleide cavalerie zal onsuccesvol blijken.

Xenophon leek de Atheners aan te willen sporen om zich voor te bereiden voordat het te laat was, waarschijnlijk omdat hij een andere aanval van Thebe vreesde, ondanks het feit dat er vrede was gesloten na 362 voor Christus. In zijn twee boeken over 'De Rijkunst' en 'De cavaleriecommandant' zet hij zijn adviezen uiteen. Hiervoor gebruikt hij de ervaringen die hij zelf had opgedaan in Perzië met Agesilaus, zijn Spartaanse vriend, tijdens verschillende cavaleriegevechten. Maar zijn adviezen met betrekking tot de cavalerie en het trainen van paarden waren niet beperkt tot deze boeken alleen. In een aantal filosofische werken zien we nog meer verwijzingen, alsmede in zijn boeken over Agesilaus en Cyrus de Grote.

Hij bestudeerde zorgvuldig de tactieken die gebruikt werden in de Slag bij Mantinea door de Thebaanse aanvoerder Epaminondas. Epaminondas was een uitstekende leider en strateeg, die goed wist hoe hij zijn cavalerie moest trainen en in het veld moest gebruiken. In de *Cavalerie Commandant*, verwijst hij ook naar een aantal tactische kwesties, waaronder formatie van de Boeotiërs die Epaminondas had gebruikt in de strijd tegen Sparta en hoe deze formatie het best kan worden gebruikt en waarom. Epaminondas wordt niet genoemd in Xenophon's *Cavalerie Commandant*, waarin hij duidelijk heeft geprobeerd te verbergen, dat hij in feite verwijst naar een Boeotische strateeg. Immers,

Xenophon had een diepe haat tegen Thebe, evenals Agesilaus en andere Atheners en Spartanen.

Hij kon dientengevolge niet naar Epaminondas met name verwijzen. De Cavalerie Commandant is het enige boek van Xenophon waarin hij niet naar een voorbeeld van hemzelf verwijst. In zijn andere boeken concentreert hij zich op of noemt hij belangrijke mensen uit vroegere of zijn eigen tijd, zoals Agesilaus, Cyrus de Grote en Socrates. In de 'Over de Rijkunst' noemt hij als voorbeeld Simon van Athene. Zijn eigen meningen uit hij in *Ways and Means*, waarin hij geeft zijn visie op Athene en verder gaat met het doen van zijn eigen aanbevelingen. Hij ventileert daarin ook zijn wens, dat Athene opnieuw de hegemonie in Griekenland zou krijgen. Hij schreef zijn 'On Horsemanship' en 'On the Cavalry Commander' om het belang van de cavalerie training, opstelling en tactiek te benadrukken. Deze vaardigheden hadden de Atheners in zijn beleving nodig om Thebe of een andere vijand het hoofd te kunnen bieden in de toekomst.

Waarom was het niet mogelijk tot op dat moment om de Atheense cavalerie naar een hoger niveau van horsemanship te brengen? Athene, een democratie, had veel moeite met zijn cavalerie. In Athene kwamen mensen op leidinggevende posities terecht, die niet automatisch de meest geschikte mensen voor deze posities waren, dat wil zeggen mannen die opgeleid en deskundig waren voor die functies. De leidinggevende functies gingen naar degenen die de beste verkiezingscampagne hadden gevoerd. Deze kritiek werd ook in die tijd veelvuldig geuit, met name vanaf het begin van de 4e eeuw, toen de democratie een hoge vlucht had genomen en politici steeds meer voor het eigen gewin gingen, volgens Aristoteles en anderen.

Omdat de leidinggevende functies werden vervuld door mensen die bijna niets wisten over de werkelijke speerpunten van het trainen van paarden, cavalerietraining, tactiek en strategie, hadden de cavaleristen weinig vertrouwen in hun leiders of weigerden eenvoudigweg om bevelen op te volgen of om te dienen onder deze mensen. De cavalerie was in dit opzicht een veel kwetsbaarder deel van het leger dan de infanterie, simpelweg omdat er paarden werden gebruikt en paarden een zekere mate van opleiding nodig hebben om te kunnen functioneren zoals men wil. Deze training kost niet alleen tijd, maar eiste ook inzicht en deskundigheid, en het is bijna onmogelijk om deskundigheid en ervaring op het slagveld te krijgen.

In de Atheense democratie werden mensen aangesteld als commandant, omdat zij ooit gekozen waren voor die positie. Daarom was het niet een kwestie van wie de beste ruiter was of wie de beste leider zou zijn, maar wie de grootste populariteit had verworven. Het was dan ook onmogelijk om de cavalerie goed op te leiden of te leiden, mede door het feit dat de echte ruiters die in de cavalerie waren, alleen maar minachting voor zo'n leider konden voelen.

Bovendien Athene was een commerciële stad waar de inwoners werden gedreven door winst. Ondernemers uit de bovenlaag waren slechts geïnteresseerd in geld verdienen of politiek en wilden waarschijnlijk niet hun tijd en geld verspillen met paarden en het trainen van paarden. Athene verloor aan niveau van *horsemanship* als gevolg van het democratische en commerciële systeem dat de overhand had.

Voor na de Oligarchie van de Dertig in 404, toen de Atheners vaststelden, dat de ballotage voor de cavalerie zou worden gedaan op basis van politieke en economische verdiensten voor de stad Athene. Het eindresultaat was dat de

cavalerie geen echt succes op het slagveld meer kon hebben. In de vierde eeuw moest de Atheense cavalerie het dan ook vrijwel altijd afleggen tegen een cavalerie die geleid werd door een capabele generaal. Deze cavalerie was doorgaans afkomstig van aristocratische of oligarchische regimes, waar de cavalerie van oudsher exclusief behoorde tot de aristocratie en waar horsemanship een veel hogere status had. De aristocraten waren goed getrainde ruiters, en bovendien werden zij vaak geleid door commandanten die zelf een hoog niveau van horsemanship hadden bereikt. De cavalerie was altijd in verband gebracht met aristocratische of oligarchische staten.

Het paard werd gebruikt door de aristocratie voor parades, races en andere wedstrijden in vredestijd, maar in tijden van oorlog werden deze paarden ingezet op het slagveld. De aristocratie wordt traditioneel beschouwd als een *horseminded* klasse. Maar voor hen is het paard niet een middel van bestaan zo als voor nomaden als de Scythen. De adel maakte gebruik van het paard voor de jacht, om te flaneren of in de strijd en in die zin zou men kunnen zeggen dat ze bekend zijn met de kunst van het opleiden en omgaan met paarden. Zij kunnen het zich waarschijnlijk veroorloven om te betalen voor het onderhoud en de opleiding van hun paarden. Zij waarderen het belang van voortdurende scholing van hun paard. Veel aristocraten hadden hun eigen fokkerijen met speciale bloedlijnen die goede renpaarden of cavaleriepaarden produceerden. Ook hielden ze goede renpaarden, net als Hiero van Syracuse of Alcibiades van Athene. Deze mannen wisten hoe ze met paarden moesten omgaan.

Horsemanship is een ambacht dat alleen kan worden verworven door dagelijkse training en zich volledig te richten op paarden en zich over te geven aan wat we noemen 'horsemindedness'. Dit is des te belangrijker voor mensen in een

hogere positie in de cavalerie. Als ze niet begrijpen waar ze het over hebben, zullen ze al snel het respect van hun mannen verliezen.

Horsemindedness komt voor bij mensen die gewend zijn aan het werken met paarden. Voor deze mensen maken paarden deel uit van hun dagelijks leven. Het omgaan met, de training en het rijden van paarden is voor hen een dagelijkse bezigheid. In andere culturen zien we dat het paard van oudsher wordt geassocieerd met de aristocratie, want in een stedelijke cultuur wordt het paard beschouwd als een luxe-item. Een zakenman heeft het te druk met zaken of werk en wil weinig of geen tijd besteden aan de opleiding van een paard, tenzij er commercieel gewin kan worden behaald.

Na de val van Sparta als een militaire macht in 362 voor Christus wilde Xenophon wilde zijn expertise door geven op het gebied van *horsemanship*, cavalerietraining en oorlog, zodat Athene weer kon streven naar hegemonie in Griekenland. Het lijkt erop, dat de aanbevelingen van Xenophon na de slag van Mantinea werden opgenomen in de wetten van Athene. Volgens Aristoteles werd de combinatie van de cavalerie en infanterie normaal en de jaarlijkse cavalerie inspecties werden niet langer voornamelijk gehouden om te bepalen of de *Hippeis* voldeden aan de norm van inkomen voor die klasse, maar om te bepalen of de paarden goed waren opgeleid en in de juiste conditie verkeerden. De paarden werden vervolgens gewaardeerd op de resultaten door middel van het toekennen van een *timesis* of waarde. Er is archeologisch bewijs voor het bestaan van *hamippoi* in Athene rond 350 voor Christus en ook Aristoteles schrijft dat *hippodromoi* of *hamippoi* werden ingezet in Athene in zijn tijd.

De conclusie van mijn onderzoek moet dan ook zijn, dat ondanks de verschillende overwinningen behaald door de Atheners in een aantal gevechten,

het inzicht lijkt te ontbreken als het ging om hun cavalerie en de noodzaak training. In de praktijk werden ze gedwongen om steeds weer te leren op het slagveld zelf en er lijkt sprake van 'trial and error' van de politiek.

De Atheners hebben een aantal successen op het slagveld gehad en zij waren in het bijzonder goed in het achtervolgen van en het afmaken van andere cavalerie, zoals gebeurde bij Mantinea na de dood van Epaminondas. Maar een goede, efficiënte en sterke cavalerie, die zou kunnen vechten in formatie is nooit binnen hun bereik geweest, omdat ze simpelweg niet over de vereiste mate van *military horsemanship* beschikten, dat immers veel meer dan alleen het goed kunnen rijden, behelst.

Curriculum Vitae

Annelies Koolen (born 25 december 1975 in Hoogerheide) went to R.K. Gymnasium Juvenaat Heilig Hart te Bergen op Zoom. She began her studies in Classical Languages at the Radboud University Nijmegen in 1994.

During the period of 1999 – 2003 she paused her studies and worked at a number of companies as ITIL consultant and webdesigner. In 2000 she founded the website Volbloeds.nl, dealing with retraining off the track thoroughbreds.

In 2003 she returned to university to complete her studies, meanwhile she worked as a groom at international racing stable ‘Lucky Stables’ and started teaching Greek and Latin as a fulltime job at Mencia de Mendoza Lyceum (Breda).

In 2005 she graduated and started her PhD research in January 2006. While working on her research, she was again a fulltime Classics teacher at respectively Emmauscollege (Rotterdam), Christiaan Huygens College (Eindhoven) and Rythoviuscollege (Eersel). In 2008 she received a MA in teaching at the “Instituut voor Leraar en School” at the Radboud University. Since 2009 she works as a fulltime classics teacher at the Strabrecht College te Geldrop.

In 2009 she also founded the website *Hippike* and her company Hippike. Located at her own Stal Caetershof in Weert she trains her Lipizzaner horses to the level of high school dressage. With *Hippike* she endeavours to pass on the principles of classical dressage in practice by educating riders and in theory by academical research and publications.